



ABOVE: Presentation evening at a local secondary school. (See page 9)

The Bridgend & Porthcawl GEM



"Your ORIGINAL priceless weekly newspaper"

The Vale's longest serving Community Newspaper

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THURSDAY, APRIL 4TH, 2013

National Pet Month
2013
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Fraudster must repay cash after a Proceeds of Crime Act hearing

A FORMER electrical engineer who defrauded his employers, Bridgend County Borough Council, has been ordered to pay £1,500 after a Proceeds of Crime Act hearing at Cardiff Crown Court.

Prosecutor Heath Edwards said 53-year-old Stephen Day had benefited to the tune of

£19,115 but the only amount available was £1,500.

Day was given six months to pay and in default will go to prison for 34 days.

Day, of Lougher, Swansea, had admitted a charge of fraud by falsely claiming he had HND electrical engineering qualifications.

He had also been convicted of ordering equipment on behalf of the council for his own benefit, and stealing a

by **AJ SICLUNA**
sound mixing desk belonging to the Berwyn Centre, Nantymoel.
He was jailed for 15 months.
When the case was heard, Mr Edwards said that Day had been employed by the council but when applying for the post he lied, by claiming he had obtained an electrical

engineering qualification.
"Day knew at the time that an HND qualification in electrical engineering was essential for the post."

"During the time of his employment, he was paid a total salary of £125,765."

"During his employment, he was repeatedly asked to attend courses to update his training but always made an excuse not to attend or simply did

not go."

He said that in addition to obtaining the job by fraud, Day used his position to purchase items on behalf of the council which were in fact then used by him for his own personal enrichment.

Added Mr Edwards: "He was spending taxpayers' money as if it was his own."

Suspicion first fell on Day in April 2011 when Mr Mark Evans, a council employee, saw an invoice for the installation of a webcam at a registry office.

The invoice seemed too expensive for such equipment and it later transpired that two expensive camcorders had been ordered, supposedly for installation at that venue when in fact, a far cheaper camera was installed but was not fit for purpose.

Mr Edwards said that when Day resigned, an audit was carried out and it was discovered that Day had made a number of purchases supposedly on behalf of the council for important projects to improve the lifestyle of those living within the council's boundaries but were redirected either directly to Day or to companies with whom he had links, and from whom he stood to make a financial gain.

These interests included Day working as a freelance media production engineer and running a Tank Driving experience called "All Tanked Up".

A FUN EASTER IN BRYNGARW!



Local children meet the 'Tree Huggers' - and a giant Easter Bunny!

VISITORS from Bridgend county borough and beyond joined in the Easter celebrations at Bryngarw House and Country Park in Brynmynyn.

The weekend was hailed as a great success for Bridgend County Borough Council's Healthy Living Service, with more than 300 visitors taking part in Easter activities.

Families had the opportunity to get involved in an Easter egg hunt around Bryngarw Country Park. They were greeted by a five metre high inflatable bunny at the visitor centre to start them on their journey.

The Easter bunny sent them on their way to meet 'Huggle Buggle' and 'Dame Nut' the Tree Huggers at the Oriental Garden. Here families got the opportunity to learn interesting facts about nature and receive plenty of hugs.

The children had another opportunity to find more chocolate eggs to the sound of woodland noises, including the occasional roaring lion or howling chimpanzee! The hunt ended with

the children being rewarded with a large Easter egg before taking part in games on the lawn with Lady and Earl Grey.

On the Saturday afternoon (March 30) over 20 children took part in the pre-sold Easter chocolate crafts workshop with local business, Fruity Bouquets.

They had the opportunity to create and design their own Easter egg case, which was filled with decorated chocolate strawberries and marshmallows, which they then took home as their special Easter treat from Bryngarw.

Coun Lyn Morgan, area.

cabinet member for well-being, said: "Well done to everyone involved in making the Easter weekend at Bryngarw such a success."

"It's great to see the new visitor centre and café bustling and to see so many families making the most of our beautiful country park."

"The next 12 months will see further improvement to facilities at Bryngarw House and Country Park as we strive to offer local people great leisure experiences and attract even more tourists to the area."

CITIZENSHIP AWARD IS WORTHY ACCOLADE FOR AUTHOR HORACE



Horace Drake, pictured with his book, and with his wedding day photograph.
PHOTO by MANDY THOMAS
(www.mandythomasphotography.co.uk).

by **PHILIP IRWIN**
THE recent Bridgend County Borough Mayor's citizenship award ceremony in the Civic Offices included one remarkable story - that of a Bridgend man who started writing his first book at the age of 90!

Horace Drake was one of the proud recipients who received an award from Coun Marlene Thomas, in his case for writing *Once Upon a Time in Aberkenfig*, the story of his own life and times.

Horace told The GEM that the idea had come from his own family. He said: "My son said: 'Dad, you have so many stories to tell, you should put them into a book'."

It became a family affair.

Horace's son, James, runs a business publishing scientific journals, and he had the books printed at his own expense.

There were dozens of family photos to include, and Horace's daughter-in-law stepped forward with illustrations to fill any gaps.

There was some work for Horace to do. He still had to write it!

The result is a book that looks very different from the typical self-published effort. *Once Upon a Time in Aberkenfig* looks a real quality hardback and what's more, it has no actual cover price.

All Horace asks is that a donation should be given to Alzheimer's Research - to counter the medical condition that claimed his wife of 60 years, Gwyneth.

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PORTHCAWL RFC Q&A

PORTHCAWL RFC is hosting a rugby question and answer evening this Friday (April 5).

The audience will be invited to ask questions of the special invited guests, including BBC Wales' Rick O'Shea and international and regional players, Ryan Bevington, Mark Breeze, Jonathan Thomas, Tom Prydie and Matthew Morgan.

Musical entertainment following the Q&A session will be provided by local singer-songwriter Jack Taylor.

The evening is open to all and tickets (£10) are available at the door, or by calling the ticket hotline on 0780 7087044.

GB

Heathbridge Miners' Square development in Pyle is revealed



An artist's impression of the square.

MYSTERY AUTHOR IS UNMASKED!

LALESTON WI

AT the meeting on March 7, the president welcomed guest speaker, Mrs Joyce James, for a return visit, who spoke of 'The Mystery Lady' - Agatha Christie.

Agatha Christie was born in Torquay in 1890 - her father was American and she was a shy and private person. She married Archie Christie in 1914 and wrote her first novel *Mysterious Affair in 1916* which was published in 1920.

After that, there were many stories and plays from her pen. She travelled extensively with her second husband, archaeologist Sir Max Mallowan, no doubt providing the background to many of her books, which have been made into films, TV dramas and stage plays, one of which opened in London in 1952 and is still running (yes, *The Mousetrap*).

Members were most interested to hear about Dame Agatha Christie, as most had either read her books or seen the plays and TV productions.

The next meeting will be on April 4, with a chance to harmonise with The Barber Shop Singers (Laleston Gardening Club at 7.15 pm).

JR

Mandarin lessons for school pupils

PUPILS at Cefn Cribwr Primary School are at the forefront of learning modern languages now that Mandarin has been added to the timetable.

"Once a week, children in the upper juniors section are being taught Mandarin, as a way of broadening their horizons and stimulating an interest in languages", said headteacher Stephen Howells.

"We already offer French as an after school club, but we felt that we wanted to place a foreign language into the curriculum. A member of staff has attended an intensive Mandarin course, and we feel that the more we can broaden the children's horizons,

then the more opportunities they will have."

The school is also hoping to introduce another language. Mr Howells added: "As a school we are working towards achieving full accreditation for the International Schools Award, having successfully obtained the intermediate award."

Coun Huw David, Bridgend County Borough Council's cabinet member for children and young people, called at the school to pick up some Mandarin tips and said: "It is fascinating to see how the range of languages being taught in schools is widening all the time. Languages teach children about different cultures and open their eyes to the world, and the earlier you learn a language, the better."

PYLE Community Council is pleased to report that work has commenced on redeveloping the land opposite Heathbridge Surgery in the centre of Kenfig Hill.

The new development is to be known as Heathbridge Miners' Square and will be dedicated to those who worked in the many mines which were the creation of much of Kenfig Hill as we know it today.

The Heathbridge Miners' Square is a Pyle Community Council project with additional funding from Bridgend County Borough Council and the Awards for All, National Lottery Fund.

Pyle Community is grateful to both Bridgend CBC and the National Lottery Fund and would also like to thank Mr David Brace for providing a coal dram which he has acquired and refurbished.

This development is the first of many projects which Pyle Community Council has in its five year plan, projects covering the whole of the communities of Pyle and Kenfig Hill including the imminent replacement of the old bus shelter on the A45 Pyle Road with a shelter more appropriate for this high profile part of the community.

RICHARD SIMS

Warren brings trophy back to Pencoed

A BRIDGEND-based youngster has been named as the top young engineer in the electronics and software technologies industry in Wales.

Warren James, who has worked at Sony UK Technology Centre at Pencoed for three years, scooped the young engineer of the year at the inaugural ESTnet Awards.

The awards, which celebrate excellence in the electronics and software technologies sector across Wales, were attended by more than 275 representatives from the industry, as well as business leaders, and included an address from the First Minister, Carwyn Jones.

Warren James said: "It feels fantastic just to be nominated for this

award by Sony but to actually win is a great achievement for me and my future development."

Ian Menzies, chair of the ESTnet, said: "For Wales to continue to innovate and compete on a global scale, it is vital that we recognise the importance of attracting exciting young talent into the UK's electronics software and technology industry. Warren is a real credit to his profession and a shining example to other young engineers."

"The electronics and software technologies sector, made up of a highly skilled workforce of over 24,000 people, generates an annual turnover of over £7 billion a year for the Welsh economy."

Readers' Letters

IMPORTANT! We reserve the right to edit all letters. We do NOT accept anonymous mail. LETTERS AND EMAILS MUST INCLUDE FULL ADDRESS AND A CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER. AN EMAIL ADDRESS ALONE IS NOT SUFFICIENT!

We will (in certain circumstances) protect a writer's identity, if requested. Please keep your letters BRIEF and address them to: The Editor, Don John, at Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7E OR email gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

'Please don't overlook the council's unsung heroes'

PLEASE permit me to deliver a 'shout out' to hard-working front-line council staff who too often get overlooked when discussing the bigger picture at county borough level.

I am a resident of the Cefn Glas area of Bridgend, and I wish to commend the work of a neighbour, Rob Pullin, who with his colleague, Tommy, is one of the 'lengthsmen' who

work very hard to keep our public areas clean and tidy.

Rob takes a real and justified pride in his work and I happen to know that if there is a sudden problem, such as a sudden appearance of broken glass, Rob will go that extra mile to get it seen to.

Sometimes staffing needs dictate that he has to work in the town centre, and when that happens you can see the difference around here until Rob and Tommy can catch up again on their own patches.

Obviously their work would be much easier if people disposed of their litter properly, or if the small minority of irresponsible dog walkers would see sense.

I hear that Bridgend and Vale councils are introducing 'wardens' with the power to issue on-the-spot fines, so there is even more reason to support the great work being done by our illustrious 'lengthsmen'.
Dr Charles Smith, Bridgend

Is council giving 105 per cent?

Having glanced through the pages of the latest Bridgend County Borough Council Bulletin ('a newsletter for every home and business') I noticed a glaring mistake on page 5 of both the English and Welsh versions.

The supposed erudite officers and members of the council I am sure would have spotted the error after it's publication, but unfortunately not before.

After all, we all know that the portions of a pie should add up to 100

per cent, so why in the case of the capital expenditure diagram does it add up to 105 per cent?

It will no doubt be explained away by some form of human transcription error but that is not the point.

The fact that it has happened at all is the point. It is also obvious that something is wrong by comparing the sizes of the two 10 per cent segments.

One may query the significance of this error but if any organisation cannot get the basics right, what might happen with something that matters?

Chris Howell, Coychurch

ALL HANDS TO FLYING STATIONS!

Did you serve on board any of the light fleet carriers, HMS Bulwark, HMS Albion, or HMS Centaur? The HMS Bulwark Albion Centaur Association is open to anyone who served at any time on these ships.

We send a magazine three times per year and run events including AGM/socials, sea trips with HMS Bulwark and anniversary commemorations at home and abroad.

Leigh Easton, Glenmoray, Hayford Pl, Cambusbarrow, Stirling, FK7 9JX or email at ngsfo@tiscali.co.uk or visit: www.bulwarkas-soc.co.uk

Power of printed word

THANK YOU to The GEM, which has again proved that it can stir the Vale Council to action.

After publishing my 'pothole' letter on March 21, the following Monday - just four days later - saw the council workers return to Aberystwyth Crescent in Barry to repair and replace two kerbstones and paving stones, marked previously by 'yellow pen man' and missed by the previous council visitation.

This illustrates, yet again, the power of the printed word, even in this digital age. Thank you; and to the Vale Council too, for a rapid response.

Christopher Short, Barry

HIGH TIDE TIMES

(UNTIL APRIL 11)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 - 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time		Ht	
	AM	M	PM	M
04 Thur	00.59	8.2	13.46	7.9
05 Fri	02.27	8.1	15.14	8.0
06 Sat	03.49	8.3	16.25	8.4
07 Sun	04.52	8.8	17.22	9.0
08 Mon	05.45	9.3	18.08	9.2
09 Tues	06.31	9.6	18.57	9.7
10 Wed	07.14	9.8	19.34	9.7
11 Thur	07.52	9.8	20.08	9.7

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should always check with a tide table specific to their location.

Cat centre team are cheering on Rosie the brave little fighter



ABOVE: Rosie on the mend after the surgery. Photographs by Sue Dobbs.



ABOVE: Rosie is looking weak before her operation.

Bridgend girl hopes to make it to the O2 grand final!

LEXI RICHMOND from Broadlands, Bridgend is now just one step away from singing at the O2 arena in London after impressing the Teenstar judges in the regional final at the Coal Exchange in Cardiff.

Lexi (17) performs under the stage name 'Ahnuh Valentine' and has now made it through to the area finals in Reading, so she is one performance away from singing at one of the greatest live music venues in the world!

She sang 'Million Dollar Man' by Lana del Rey and prides herself in singing vintage and unique songs such as 'Blue Velvet' and 'House of the Rising Sun'.

Teenstar is a competition showcasing national talent for teens and pre-teens which searches for the best singers, song writers, rappers and vocalists of all genres.

More than 9,000 hopefuls entered Teenstar in its first year



Lexi Richmond, on stage as Ahnuh Valentine.

and now she is among the last few acts competing for a place at the grand final.

Lexi is studying travel and tourism at Bridgend College and bases her performances on her idol Lana Del Rey, who she says is her inspiration.

Lexi has been a performer for 10 years after being a dedicated student at Stagecoach Performing Arts School.

She said: 'I'm lucky to get this far, and will be even luckier if I win it!'

The first thing I'll do is buy some Louboutins."

THE plight of a young cat, Rosie, has touched the hearts of local cat lovers – and donations have poured in to pay for a life-saving operation.

The Bryncethin Cats Adoption centre manager Sue Dobbs explained: "Rosie was admitted to the centre as an eight-month-old cat on March 17.

"It was apparent that something was seriously wrong as she weighed 1.2 kg, the same weight as 12-week-old kitten. She was admitted to the vet after developing breathing problem and after X-Rays, was diagnosed with a diaphragmatic hernia.

"This is a defect or hole in the diaphragm, the sheet of muscle which separates the chest and abdominal cavities."

Rosie's only chance of survival was an urgent life-saving operation to repair the hole – an operation which was life threatening, and the vet was not sure if she would pull through.

However, Rosie had touched the staff's hearts and Sue said: "We all believed she was deserving of this life line, as she is a real sweetheart and, despite her obvious discomfort, we could see she was a real fighter.

"The cost of the operation was around £500. Times are hard at the moment and we desperately needed to raise the money for the operation, so we launched Rosie's appeal.

"Members of the public could donate either on Rosie's just giving page www.justgiving.com/rosieappeal, by text, or by post.

"We posted Rosie's story on our

Facebook page and were little prepared for the amazing response.

"Over £1,200 was donated in just 12 hours; the total amount donated is more than £1,650, with money still coming in. The generosity of the public meant that Rosie's operation could go ahead and other cats in desperate need could be helped as well."

The chances of Rosie's surviving the operation were stacked against her. She was in very poor condition and had been kept on oxygen to see her through the previous night.

Clive Kemeys, partner director at Shepherds the Vets, who operated on Rosie said, "Her colon, small intestine and spleen were all in her chest cavity. It's surprising she survived this long".

Sue Dobbs said: "I went to see Rosie the day after the operation, I was astounded at the difference in her.

"She had transformed from a cat who could barely lift her head up and open her eyes, to a bright eyed, alert cat who was purring and attempting to play with her drip. Rosie still has a long way to go to but her odds of her survival are increasing with every day which passes.

"The fact that she is still alive today is a testimony to the overwhelming generosity of the public."

She added: "The team at the centre have been uplifted by the support from the public for Rosie and the centre as a whole.

"Everyone who has heard about Rosie is keeping their finger, toes and whiskers crossed that she will go on to make a full recovery."

Porthcawl bridge club

MOST sports clubs run a league competition ranking players' performance over a period of time.

The Porthcawl Bridge Club runs a league competition with a difference. The membership is ranked into three divisions, and over a three-month period, players' performance on each Thursday club night is reflected in their league position.

Over the quarter, an individual's best eight from 13 scores are considered, and at the end of the period players are promoted/relegated through the divisions, and there are cash prizes for each division's winner(s).

However division one winners don't receive any prize, the emphasis being on encouraging lower division players (first prize £15).

There is some small consolation for the higher division players – they can, and often do, win the weekly prize for winning on the night.

This past quarter's results are: Division 1: 1st: Tony Haworth, 2nd: Trish Saunders; Division 2: –1st Dil & Marian Evans; Division 3: 1st Iris Carey; 2nd Maurice Harris.

Other latest results: Saturday March 16: first – Connie Dick & Vera Robinson, second – Colin & Hazel Heard; Monday March 18: first – Gary Williams & Tony Haworth, second – Betty

Longley & Sue Anthony.

Thursday March 21: first – Peter & Sandie Jenkins, second – John Cobby & Tony Haworth; Saturday, March 23: first – Colin & Lavinia Thomas, second – Colin & Hazel Heard.

Monday March 25: first – Peter & Sandie Jenkins, second – Terry Dolan & Roger Plant.

Thursday March 29:

first – Rob Charlesworth & Tony Haworth, second – Dil & Marian Evans.

The club meets three times a week – Saturday and Thursday at the Avel-y-Mor centre, and Monday at the Rest Hotel 7pm – 10.15pm.

To contact the club, call 01656 785794.

TONY HAWORTH

Quiz League round-up

THE season ended on Monday, March 25, with the finals of the KO Cup and Plate competitions.

In the Cup, there was the expected win for Llangewydd Arms, but it was by no means a walkover.

Crown Inn 'A' went behind early on but fought back without losing too much ground.

They still had a chance if they could complete the roll-up round successfully.

Llangewydd decided to stick on four points and Crown Inn had to go for it. Unfortunately, it didn't come about, they slipped up on the fourth question, and the gap that opened up now was a bit too wide to close, and Llangewydd increased that during the last section to retain the trophy with the score 70-48.

Pheasant Poachers, who have had a disappointing season in league

matches, came good in the Plate and had a slightly surprising victory over a good Tyrysha Royals team by 53-49.

The provisional date for registering for next season is September 9.

Here are this week's teasers:

1 The name of which West African country comes from the Portuguese for 'Lion Mountain'?

2 Which 19th century American writer coined the phrase 'When in doubt, tell the truth'?

3 Who is the third highest goalscorer for England after Bobby Charlton and Gary Lineker?

4 Which chemical element has the highest melting point?

A Rudge (for Quiz League)

Answers:
1 Sierra Leone
2 Mark Twain
3 Jimmy Greaves
4 Tungsten

Brynteg School takes two prizes in Welsh engineering challenge



ABOVE: Former Brynteg pupil Carwyn Jones, The First Minister, meets one of the Brynteg teams.

STAFF and students at Brynteg Comprehensive School are celebrating after science students took two prizes in an engineering challenge contested by 66 schools.

Brynteg entered two teams into the Engineering Education Scheme Wales (EESW), and the final took place recently at the Celtic Manor Hotel, Newport.

The teams worked with two local engineering companies and won two awards against strong opposition from 66 schools.

Team One took the 'Best Overall Team Performance' and Team Two came out on top in 'Best appreciation of Safety Issues'.

The school was also presented with a long-serving award for competing in the event for more than 20 years. This award was accepted on behalf of the school by Mr Jon Catton, who has been regularly involved since 1992.

Along with the judging panel, the teams were visited by two former Brynteg pupils, the First Minister Carwyn Jones, along with the broadcaster and journalist Rebecca John, who both expressed great interest in the teams' efforts and achievements.

Brynteg Team One members were John Hayes, Rhys Francis, Dominic Mannetta-Jones, Kieran Mannetta-Jones, Joseph Smith and Elliot Evans and they mentored by Design and Technology teacher Mr Jon Catton

The team were partnered with Guardian technologies in Pyle, who manufacture high specification flow monitoring equipment for the oil and gas industries.

The company's engineers supported the team who were tasked with developing a vibration testing jig, allowing the company to confirm the quality and reliability of the components used in the manufacture of its



ABOVE: The Mayor of Bridgend County Borough, Coun Marlene Thomas, also visited the Brynteg teams at the Celtic Manor Hotel.

monitoring equipment. The judges were impressed with the engineering depth of the team work, and the teamwork that went into making the final prototype, which was displayed in the competition at the Celtic Manor Hotel, Newport.

Brynteg Team Two members were Luke Hill, Matthew Jones, Joshua Wilde, Lucy Davies and Elin Strachan, and they were mentored by engineering teacher Mr Adrian Davies.

The team partnered with Tata Steel in Port Talbot and had to design

a robust water pumping system to control the water level in a large holding tank prior to treatment.

The system was required to be capable of withstanding large quantities of debris, along with being able to cope with being in a remote location.

The team developed the hardware and software required to control the water levels in the tank. The judges were impressed with the innovative use of the locally-manufactured Raspberry Pi mini computer to control the system, and the attention to detail.

Rocking for KPC Bridgend
THERE is a chance to 'Keep Rocking for KPC' at Pyle Legion (4pm-10pm) on April 6; £4 on the door.

The event features Black Arrows, Jeronimo Jones, The Video Clones, Lack of Empathy, Rebuild an Empire, Aimee Edwards, Gareth Taylor, Sullie Burgess, and other special guests.

Contact 01656 745399/749219; kpcyouth@hotmail.com for details.

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YOUR CHANCE TO SHARE THE COMMUNITY NEWS

CHOIR SINGS FOR LOCAL CHURCH

SEVERAL members of Cŵr Merched Cwm Llynfi (Llynfi Valley Ladies Choir) are also members of the choir in St Theodore's Church, Kenfig Hill.

The choir was asked to put on a concert in the church to help raise money to repair the organ. The evening was a great success and £250 was raised.

The soloist was David Rees, a local young farmer with a remarkable voice. There was a Welsh contribution from the youngsters from the Urdd group in Porthcawl.

The organiser, churchwarden Margaret Phillips, deserves everyone's congratulations for the splendid effort she put into the preparations for the concert.

Cŵr Merched rehearses in the Celtic Club, Garth on Wednesday evenings from 7pm. Visitors and new members will be most welcome.

ABERKENFIG AND DISTRICT WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

RECENTLY, it was the turn of Penyfai WI to entertain the

other members of their link.

On March 22, 14 members of Aberkenfig WI boarded a mini bus bound for Brackla and the Archbishop McGrath Catholic School for an evening of Victorian fashion and history.

The venue was a surprise as this is a brand new school. The ladies were directed to the theatre, which had a large stage and modern sound system.

The members were welcomed and a maid in full costume introduced the presenter for the evening, June Ashton, alias Lady June Ashton.

Lady June wore a full crinoline, hat and gloves, in fact she was dressed for visiting friends, she then went on to introduce other ladies all with fanciful names, who were all volunteers from Penyfai WI, to the stage and talked the audience through the costumes, all of which were handmade by Lady June.

There were eight day dresses of the Victorian period, 1820 to 1890; all were announced by the maid with deep pretentious curseys and some caustic and funny remarks.

The dresses modelled started as crinolines and went through the changes in fashion of the very rich to the bustle

which was very difficult to sit down in - which was why the chairs of the period were so wide, to accommodate the gowns.

A break was called for tea and cakes and then it was back to the theatre for the concluding section of the fashion show, which was for special occasions and ball gowns.

The ball gowns were spectacular made of wild silk, which would originally have been shipped from China. All the dresses were accessorised with hats and kid gloves, there would also been a lot of lovely jewels worn.

It was a very pleasant evening. All the ladies enjoyed the event, whether they dressed up and modelled or just entertained.

The vote of thanks was made by the president of Laleston WI, who emphasised how much everyone had enjoyed the evening and, as it is the turn of Laleston to arrange the next Link social, she said they would have to work hard to provide another wonderful evening.

MAESTEG AMATEUR OPERATIC SOCIETY
THE society, which this year is celebrat-

NORTH BRIDGEND NEWS

A message for all readers in the north of Bridgend who would like to have items included in the community news columns of The GEM:

If you wish to submit reports on any social activity in this region, please contact me.

I am very approachable and will endeavour to include every newsworthy subject.

Contact details: **CLIVE MITCHELL**

1 Tyn-Y-Coed Close, Sarn, Bridgend CF32 9NQ

TEL: 01656 725399

email: tyncoed1@yahoo.co.uk



ing its 70th anniversary, is looking for persons who are interested in performing in its forthcoming production of *Jekyll and Hyde* at Maesteg Town Hall, October 23-26.

Auditions will be at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd on Saturday, April 6 at 12 noon. Telephone Sarah on 07922 218462, for more details.

The society is holding a concert at Maesteg Town Hall on Friday, April 19, at 7pm. The concert will include performances from past and present members, with songs spanning the 70 years of the society's existence.

For tickets for both shows, telephone 01656 739546 or Sian on 07960 105917.

The society holds rehearsals at Plasnewydd Primary School during term

times on Monday and Friday evenings between 7pm and 9pm

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Wellbeing centres have been set up which provide free advice and information on all aspects of mental health, with one to one support from community support workers.

They will provide activities, including music, art, gardening, photography and reading workshops. These centres are also intended to provide a social environment so that everyone can make new friends

At present there are three wellbeing centres in place. They are:

Bridgend Wellbeing Centre, Nolton Church Hall, Merthyr Mawr Road, CF31 3NH; Kenfig Hill Wellbeing Centre, Talbot Community Centre, 9, Prince Rd, Kenfig Hill, CF33 6ED; Maesteg Wellbeing Centre, Central Ecumenical Church, Church St, Maesteg, CF34 9AA.

MAESTEG CHOIR

Take Note is a choir formed from members of the chorus section of the Maesteg Amateur Operatic Society, and is holding a fund raising quiz at the 'Maltster's Arms', Maesteg, tonight Thursday, April 4, at 8pm.

There will be an entry fee of £2 and the quizmaster will be Mr Jim Lediard. The choir rehearses at Pleniel Church, Station Street, Maesteg, on Tuesday evenings between 7.30pm and 9.30pm, and welcomes new members to come along.

Telephone 07957 091249 for more information.

GARW CHOIR

The Cŵr Meibion Cwm Garw (Garw Valley male choir) recently took part in a concert in St David's Church, Pontycymer, to raise funds for the Flanders' Welsh Memorial.

The concert opened with the South Wales Police Band, under the leadership of John Butler, playing 'The

Rising of the Lark' after which the male choir took to the stage with Isalaw's 'Sanctus'.

There followed an enchanting performance of 'To Make You Feel My Love' by the Valley's rising star, Phoebe-Anne Lewis.

During the interval, tea and Welsh cakes were generously provided by the ladies of the Church as a patriotic gesture on St. David's Day.

Local donations to the fund are already at £530, including a donation of £100 from Cŵr Meibion Cwm Garw, that was presented to honoured guest and district secretary of the Royal British Legion, Mr. Ivan Beatty.

A surprise followed when compère Cedryn Lloyd announced that a well-known and much loved Garw Valley family has achieved a 'hat-trick' of successes.

First, Phoebe-Anne Lewis has been given the thumbs up at recent TeenStar auditions and is on course to compete in the National Final in The O2 Arena in London, while her brother Adam has been

selected as one of the final four contestants in the Principality Building Societies 'Wales Young Singer of the Year'.

Grand-dad Bryan Young, the musical director of the Cŵr Meibion Cwm Garw, has received a citizenship award from the Mayor of the County Borough of Bridgend. Heartiest congratulations on such wonderful and richly deserved honours.

The choir rehearses at Pontycymer RFC on Monday and Wednesday evening from 7pm to 8.30pm, new members are made most welcome.

BRIDGEND CARERS' CENTRE

The above centre is a charity which provides support and information to carers, located in 87, Park Street, Bridgend, CF31 4AZ (01656 658479) and is a welcoming venue for all.

On Mondays (April 8, 15, 22, 29) there will be the 'book cwtch' between 1pm and 2pm, where help is given by providing a book or poem with the opportunity to practice reading aloud. This has proven to be helpful to the patient the carer looks after by helping the patient relax and can relieve symptoms of depression.

On Tuesday, April 9, a representative from the CRUSE bereave-

ment support group will be at the centre to offer advice from 10.30am to 12 noon.

On Wednesday, April 10, in the Community Café there will be a representative from Carer's Wales in attendance from 12.30 to 3.30pm.

MAESTEG GLEEMEN MALE VOICE CHOIR

THE choir, which has organised the Welsh young singer's competition for a number of years, and had to cancel the event in January because of the weather conditions, will be presenting a reorganised competition on Saturday, April 13, in conjunction with the choir's annual concert.

It will be at Maesteg Town Hall and the compère for the evening will be Beverly Humphries. The adjudicators will be Stephen Harris, chorus master for the Welsh National Opera, Suzanne Murphy, a teacher at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and Eric Roberts, the international baritone.

The doors open at 6pm and the event begins at 6.30pm. Tickets (£5) can be obtained from any choir member or in the town hall box office.

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Bridgend College music students rock the joint with tale of the headless horseman



MUSIC and drama students at Bridgend College performed their own rock musical, *The Heavy Handed Handsome Headless Horseman*, last week over two nights in the college's Sony Theatre.

The book and music, featuring original songs, was entirely written by the students.

Photographer Randell John dropped into the final rehearsal to take these images of cast members

**PHOTOGRAPHS by
RANDELL JOHN
(LSWPP)**

www.randelljohnphotography.com
01656 662324



WHO WANTS TO BUILD WHAT AND WHERE?

Mr John Pridde - R/O 8 Mayfield Avenue, Newton, Porthcawl - To fell dangerous Ash Tree (T1).
Cennox Plc - Post office 15 Newton Nottage Road, Porthcawl, Bridgend - Illuminated signage around an existing ATM.
AS Watson (Health &

Beauty) UK - 10 Talbot Street, Maesteg, Bridgend - One non-illuminated fascia sign.
BCBC regeneration projects - Bridgend Northern distributor Road, South Cornelly, Porthcawl - Lamppost banners to advertise events and other tourism info being held with

Bridgend county borough.
J & J Motors Ltd - J & J Motors, A48 Laleston, Bridgend - New car showroom and MOT test bay.
Mrs Ruth James - 55 Llwyn Castan, Broadlands, Bridgend - Convert garage into habitable room.

Mr Stephen Thomas - 274 New Road, Porthcawl, Bridgend - New flat roof extension.
Mr G Thomas - The Grange, Ty Maen, Porthcawl Road, South Cornelly, Bridgend - Single storey extension at rear of property.
Mr Geoff Walker - 12 Brynawel, Bridgend - Raise roof of garage to accommodate higher vehicle.

Mr and Mrs G Hopkins - 21 Pen yr Heol, Pen-y-Fai, Bridgend - Single storey extension.
Mr Roy Derrick - Land off High Street, Heol y Cyw, Bridgend - Use of land for storage of materials, plant and vehicles.
Mrs CA Webster - 70 Heol Castell, Coety, Bridgend - Single storey extension to provide bedroom and ensuite bathroom.

Mr Matthew Bailey - The Haven, The Court, Coychurch, Bridgend - Single storey rear extension.
St Clare's Convent - St Clare's Convent, Porthcawl - Widen existing entrance and part driveway.
Town and Country Hotels - Coed Y Mwstwr Hotel, Coychurch, Bridgend - Retrospective consent for works to hotel, Hendre & Burton Suite, inc alterations to new bar, new vaulted ceiling (Hendre Suite).
Mr Albert Birkett -

Tynton Farmhouse, Llangeinor, Bridgend - Extensions, re-roofing, new fenestration and general repairs.
Mr Albert Birkett - Tynton Farmhouse, Llangeinor, Bridgend - Extensions, re-roofing, new fenestration, general repairs and demolish single storey annexe.

Mrs C Daer - 14 Katie Street, Blaengarw, Bridgend - Change of use from shop to residential (remove shop front) and forming store structure to rear.

Mrs Meryl Foskett - 28 The Green Avenue, Porthcawl - Demolish existing conservatory and construct single storey rear extension.

Mr Richard Oxbey - Gelli'r Onn Farm, Richard Street, Pontycymmer, Bridgend - Erect new building required for storage of winter feed/equipment.

Mr G Andrews - 36 Burns Crescent, Cefn Glas, Bridgend - Rear extension.

Mr A Ford - 12 Duke Street, Maesteg, Bridgend - Erect single detached garage in garden.

Mrs Evans - Ground floor flat, Silverthorne, The Square, Porthcawl, Bridgend - Lean-to conservatory to rear.

Mr and Mrs J Williams - 25 The Burrows, Porthcawl, Bridgend - Replace existing conservatory with a new conservatory.
Mrs A Richards - 8 Heol Cynwyd Llangynwyd, Maesteg - Single storey bedroom/shower room extension, level access platform and ramp for a registered disabled person.

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- The people are warm and hospitable.
- It has a delightful sub-tropical climate.
- It's known for its natural beauty.
- Funchal, is a hub for culture and the arts.
- There's a rich cultural heritage, Renaissance architecture, monuments and churches.
- It has a tapestry of plantations & vineyards.
- Madeira is famous for its fortified wine.
- The network of "levadas" offers visitors the perfect walking holiday.
- The famous toboggan run from Monte to Funchal is not to be missed.

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MEMORIES OF ED EVANS LIVE ON AS ANNUAL WALK IN HIS NAME IS HELD



THE Ed Evans Foundation, which was started by Marcross resident Ed Evans, has held numerous events in recent years to raise funds for cancer research and research into brain tumours.

GEM photographer Glyn Evans was on hand to capture images of the walkers as they set off on the latest event to be held – the 2013 Ed Evans Walk.

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

OTHER PICTURES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THIS EVENT.

Pictures can be purchased by contacting:

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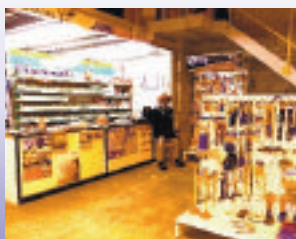


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Local Castle Players in 'one act plays'

BRIDGEND Castle
Players' latest
production is 'An
Evening of One Act
Plays'.

Two, one-act plays are
being performed:

• 'A Year in the
Death of Eddie Jester'
by T Gregory Argall,
directed by Andrew
Morgan.

• 'A Case of Good
Intentions' by Peter
Stallard, directed by
James Wilson.

'A Year in the Death
of Eddie Jester' is set
across the space of a
year. Eddie has a loving
wife and a great job as a
stand-up comic, but currently
he's getting a lot of
rest – in a coma.

Adding to his troubles
are the girlfriend his
wife knows nothing
about, and his money-
oriented agent.

'A Case of Good
Intentions' is a light
comedy play, set in a
Welsh pub. A motley
group of friends are
assembled after hours in
the bar room of the
Bridgend Castle
Mochyn Du (Black Pig)
pub on Christmas Eve. A

mysterious stranger
enters the pub and leaves
something behind which
changes everything for
everyone.

For some members of
the cast this will be their
first production with the
company. Bridgend
Castle Players have suc-
cessfully been recruiting
new actors and stage
personnel over the past
18 months as part of an
initiative to extend the
promotion of dramatic
art in Bridgend County.

Full details of this,
together with forthcom-
ing productions and ven-
ues may be viewed on
their web-site:
www.bridgendcastle-players.org

Performances will be
held on Friday, April 12
at the OCLP Social
Club, Bryntirion; Friday,
April 19 at the Non-Pol,
Ogmore Vale. Doors
open 8pm, curtain up
8.30pm.

Tickets cost £5 each
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the venues, on the door
on the night and through
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SANDVILLE STUDENTS CLASS OF 2012-2013 REFLECT ON A BUSY FIRST TERM

DURING this academic year, 33 students from local comprehensive schools enrolled at the Sandville Self Help Centre.

In addition to obtaining on-the-job experience of caring and the therapeutic facilities provided by the centre, they also receive a lecture each week given by a notable speaker.

During the first term from September to December 2012, they were spoilt for choice.

The first speaker was Mr John Jenkins, president of the International Mental Health Network and a consultant with the World Health Organisation.

Mr Jenkins' lecture, entitled 'Mental Health History', was given to a captivated student audience. His illustrated presentation covered the treatment and stigma of mental health problems, from the very early days of the 'mad house', progressing through the 'asylums' period right up to today's modern understanding, analysis and treatment of mental illnesses.

Before retiring from full time employment, Mr Jenkins spent many years working for the World Health Organisation in Palestine and Israel.

Mr Vinod Kumar, consultant ophthalmic surgeon at the Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend, also gave a very interesting and well illustrated presentation to an enthralled audience.

In his talk - 'The Ageing Human Eye' - Mr Kumar showed in great detail, yet with great simplicity, how the functions and features of the eye change from birth to old age.

He also explained how many of these deficiencies could be corrected by treatment and surgery.

A very interesting talk was given to the students from a patient's point of view, by Mr Charlie Helvisi. A cancer sufferer, Mr Helvisi was one of Gwyneth Poacher's first patients when she became a Macmillan nurse 30 years ago.

Mr Helvisi described the trauma of having cancer, the treatment that he had received, and how he had overcome the disease to survive to the present day.

The next speaker was Father Irvin Hamer, honorary chaplain at the Sandville Self Help Centre for many years, who spoke to the students on how important it was to understand the religious beliefs and faiths of patients during their treatment.

In many instances, it was equally important to understand the influence of the patient's belief and faith in effecting a full recovery from an illness and/or operation, as it was to diagnose the patient's problem and decide on treatment.

Concluding the programme of lectures for the first term was Mr Win Griffiths, the chairman of the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board. Mr Griffiths' talk was based on the organisation and management of the health board of which he was chairman.

He highlighted the size and complexity of the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board (which covers an area embracing Swansea, Neath, Port Talbot and Bridgend), and gave details of the running costs, as well as the management of the medical, nursing and ancillary staff and services required to enable such an organisation to operate and function efficiently.

The visit to the Sandville Self Help Centre was probably Mr Griffiths' last official function as chairman of the health board as he retired from this post at the end of December 2012. We wish him and his wife Ceri, a long and well-earned retirement.

REPORT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEITH E MORGAN



With the students is Father Irvin Hamer, the Honorary Chaplain of the Sandville Self Help Centre.



LEFT: Mr Charlie Helvisi, a cancer sufferer.

BELOW: The first batch of students enrolling at Sandville in September 2012 for the 2012-2013 academic year.

ABOVE: Mr Vinod Kumar, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend.



LEFT: Mr John Jenkins, president of the International Mental Health Network and a consultant with the World Health Organisation.

ABOVE: Lecturer Mr Win Griffiths, the chairman of the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board.

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PENCOED SCHOOL CELEBRATES PUPILS' ACHIEVEMENTS AT PRESENTATION NIGHT

PENCOED Comprehensive students were honoured for a range of achievements in a variety of fields at the school's presentation night.

A school spokeswoman said: "One of Pencoed Comprehensive School's core aims is to 'Celebrate the Best', and this is certainly what we did at our annual prize evening ceremony on March 21.

"This is always an evening that we look forward to, giving current and former pupils, along with parents and guests, an opportunity to celebrate our young people's academic, musical and sporting achievements, as well as being rewarded for personal effort and improvement.

"Thank you to all of those who took part in the ceremony, especially our guest speaker Mr. Peter Vaughan, Chief Constable of South Wales Police.

"This year's event followed on from record-breaking results in the GCSE exams last summer, a move from band 5 in the Welsh Government's banding to band 3, and an inspection by ESTYN

in February, which left the school with a glowing report and removed us from requiring any further follow-up action.

The headteacher, Mr David George, told the audience: "Year-11 pupils returned our best ever GCSE results by a mile!

"For instance, eight pupils in every 10 (81 per cent) achieved five or more GCSE grades at C or better – this was the best school performance in Bridgend.

"School banding in December showed Pencoed rise from band 5 to band 3. Welsh Government officers visited us earlier this month to find out how we had achieved this. They told us that Pencoed was the second-highest improving school in Wales from out of band 5."

He continued: "It is not just about statistics, it is all about the individual. We have top class musical performers, actors and dancers, outstanding sports stars, champion debaters and artists, gifted scientists, mathematicians, writers and linguists."

PHOTOGRAPHS by CHARLOTTE PEARSON.



ABOVE: Rhys Howell was capped by Wales at under-11 rugby.



Receiving the Chorister Prize, and a soloist at the prize evening, was Ellie Barham.



Katie Graves was the top pupil at the GCSE exams.



The winner of the Public Speaking, NUM Wern Tarw Lodge Prize, and a county under-16 hockey player, was Megan Maunders.



ABOVE: Playing football for Bridgend and District under-13s are (left to right): Morgan Howells, Aran Stevens, Rhys Jordan, Rhydian Gore.



ABOVE: Winner of the headteacher's prize and the Lewis Morgan Trophy was Megan Maunders.



ABOVE: Playing rugby for Bridgend and District under-12s are Ben Costellow and Joshua Sands.

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Glories of Dyffryn House now on view for visitors to the Vale

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

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Pictures can be purchased by contacting:

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Visit our studio in the Wool Barn, Verity's Court, Cowbridge.

DYFFRYN HOUSE is now able to be viewed by visitors along with its famous gardens.

Work is ongoing at one of the jewels in the Vale. Visitors to the house are even able to view the spectacular ceilings (see below) using bean bags!



PC lines up for Wales in 53rd police dog trials

SOUTH Wales Police are hosting the 53rd National Police Dog Trials from Friday, April 5 to Sunday, April 7, at Margam Country Park.

Swansea based PC Kevin Hughes and police dog Zeena won the competition last year, and the defending champions will be representing Wales on home ground alongside PC Ian Hemburrow and police dog Roxy from Bridgend.

A total of 21 top

police dogs and their handlers from Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland will compete – seven each day at Margam Park – where they will tackle phase three of the competition.

The phase three section at Margam Country Park is open to the public daily from 10am – 5pm.

Each phase tests the police dogs and handlers in situations they are likely to experience in an operational environment, but phase one and two are not open to the public.



COWBRIDGE UNDER-12S RUN RIOT AT ABERCWMBOI RFC

COWBRIDGE under-12s travelled to Abercwmboi for the first meeting for a couple of seasons, with just 15 players.

The game started well for Cowbridge, when their pack pushed the Abercwmboi scrum off the ball for number 8 Ruben Williams to pick up and score under the posts. Ioan Williams converted.

Cowbridge were

moving the ball from one side of the pitch to the other, dragging the Abercwmboi defence with them. After six phases, full-back Tom Humphreys found himself with an easy run in unopposed.

Even the forwards were getting into the act of free flowing rugby, with powerful runs by Jack Little and Luke Conner. Quick recycled ball allowed outside-half Evan Thomas to feed second row Jack Dixon, lurking on the touch

line.

With the try line in touching distance, Dixon unselfishly gave a simple pass to Barny Langton-Cryer to score in the corner, making it Abercwmboi 0 – Cowbridge 17.

Not to be out done, the forwards began to get into the try scoring mode, with Luke Conner powering over the line with a couple of defenders on his back. Ioan Williams converted.

Cowbridge continued to play some great run-

ning rugby. With the defence struggling to cover the ground, scrum-half Ioan Williams produced a couple of dummies and a strong hand off to score an individual try. R Williams converted.

Following another scrum against the head, Benji Williams scored his first try of the season for the under-12s, after stepping up from the under-11s. Ioan Williams converted.

Centre Harry Ridge made a great catch from a clearing kick and quick recycled ball allowed Evan Thomas, to walk in. Ioan Williams converted. The half-time score was Abercwmboi 0 – Cowbridge 45.

After a scrappy first 10 minutes Cowbridge finally broke through after the backs put Ruben Williams in the clear.

The final try came again from a great solo effort by Ioan Williams, who threw a couple of dummies and found himself clear.

With no covering defence, he scored the game's final try, at which point the referee called the game to a close. Abercwmboi 0 – Cowbridge 55.

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ST CYRES SCHOOL CELEBRATES ITS YOUNG AWARD WINNERS' EFFORTS!

IN the last school week before Easter, St Cyres School held its annual awards evening to celebrate the efforts, achievements and progress of pupils in years 7 – 10.

A school spokesman said: "This is always a very important day in the St Cyres School calendar because it gives staff and governors the opportunity to reward many of the pupils of whom we are so proud."

"It is always a very difficult process to select the winners, as so many of our pupils make us proud on a daily basis."

This year there were 37 award winners and the categories ranged from sporting and music awards to prizes for academic achievement and progress.

There were also several special awards, including the David Davies Award for Endeavour, the Friends of St Cyres Award for the most inspirational pupil, and the Governors' Award for the most improved pupil.

The school is always grateful for the generosity of local businesses and others who sponsor some of the awards. This year, sponsors included JM Textiles, Leadbitter, CAVMS and Glen Cleaning.

We were particularly pleased to receive a very generous donation from a former pupil, Jonathan Crocker, who donated an award for excellence in the STEM Subjects.

Jonathan is now working in London for a very prestigious financial institution and he typifies the St Cyres ethos – he is a success but remembers his roots and wants to give something back.

Our many special guests, including school governors and staff, Vale of Glamorgan councillors and the Penarth Town Mayor, Coun Philip Rapier, were entertained on the evening by some of the musical talent of our school.

Felix Peterken wowed the audience with his saxophone jazz performance of Benny Golson's 'Five Spot after Dark'. Ellis Hopkins played Bach's 'Air' masterfully on the piano and Emily Thorne produced an exceptional performance on the violin, playing Vivaldi's 'Concerto in A Minor'.

The regional managing director of Leadbitter, the construction company building our new school, Mr Bob Bradley, was our guest speaker this year and provided pupils with some sage advice for ensuring



Sasha Winton receiving the David Davies Award from the Penarth Mayor, Coun Philip Rapier.

the bright futures of which they are capable.

AWARD WINNERS

The Governors' Award: Nadine Ismail;
The Friends Award: Kora Blair;
David Davies Award: Sasha Winton;
Contribution to the School Community: Sannan Iqbal;
Contribution to Charity and Community: Rebecca Cummings;
Literacy Award: Mark Masangkay;

Outstanding progress

Year-7 (JM Textiles): Euan Mackay;
Year-7 (JM Textiles): Hannah Lewis;
Year-8 (Leadbitter): Sophie Burman;
Year-9 (Leadbitter): Matthew Jackson;
Year-10 (Glen Cleaning): Shauna-Leigh Ellis;

Sports awards

Sporting achievement: Evie Brown; Sporting achievement: Molly Owen-Ffoulkes; Sporting achievement: Finlay Davies; Sporting achievement: James Head;

Musical achievements:

John Leach Award for Extra-Curricular Activities: Felix Peterken; Contribution to Performance in School: Rebekah West; Most Promising Musician: Lauren Jagger; Most Improved Musician: Daniel Parfitt.

Departmental awards:

Mathematics: Zakariya Hassan; English: Eleni Harfoot; Science: Jack Pickford; Art: Carys Inker; Business Studies: Daniel Lock; Geography: Amy Morgan; History: Rachel Prew; ICT: Aaron Davies;



Euan Mackay receives the JM Textiles Award for Outstanding Progress in year-7.



Kora Blair collects the Friends of St Cyres Award for Inspiration to Others from the Chair of the Friends, Mrs Jackie Pile.

MFL: Autumn Boswell; Music: Ellis Hopkins; PE: Nawaf Saleh; Performing Arts: Coby Smith; Photography: Beth Langford; RE: Marion Podesta; Technology: Matthew Wright; Welsh: Millie Baston; Welsh Baccalaureate: Sibaam Arwo; STEM Subjects: Jiggy Rodriguez.



Jiggy Rodriguez receives the STEM Award from St Cyres head girl, Eloise Johnson.



Mark Masangkay receives the Literacy Award from LRC Manager, Mrs. Johnson.

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GETHIN'S DESPAIR TURNS TO JOY... Cochlear implant team celebrates centenary success



LEFT: From left to right: Alan Gibbon, audiologist; Gethin Williams, 100th cochlear implant patient; Ann Stanton, Gethin's mum; and Carol Llewellyn, hearing therapist.

A 21-year-old chef who lost his hearing two years ago has become the 100th patient to have his hearing restored using a cochlear implant.

Williams, from Cefn Glas, started to suffer from tinnitus (a ringing in the ear), before developing profound deafness.

He tried using ordinary hearing aids, but found he still wasn't able to hear. So he was

referred to the cochlear implant team at the Princess of Wales Hospital to see if he was suitable for the device.

Gethin's treatment was successful, with his hearing now almost perfect.

"Losing my hearing had a huge impact on my life.

"I turned into a hermit. I couldn't socialise with my friends, or do simple things like go out for a meal or to the cinema.

"If I did go anywhere, my mum had to come with me just in case anyone tried to talk to me. I couldn't work and I had to sell my car.

"Since having the implant, I can hear everything; I don't struggle at all.

"The difference is amazing, and I feel as though everything has gone back to normal.

"Within a few weeks of the implant I had a new job, and I've just bought a new car.

"Even simple things such as hearing how much something costs in a shop has helped to boost my confidence.

"The team are absolutely fantastic and really supportive. I couldn't have asked them for more."

Alan Gibbon, audiologist at the Princess of Wales Hospital, added: "It is fantastic to see how well Gethin is progressing, especially as it has only been a few months since his surgery.

"The level of success differs from patient to patient, and they will always be classed as having a hearing loss.

"However, all patients should be able to have a normal conversation, and their outcomes are better than with hearing aids."

A cochlear implant is placed under the skin behind the ear, and uses a small electrode to connect it to the cochlea (the part of the ear which hears).

When it picks up a noise or sound, it uses an electrical impulse to stimulate the cochlea to

hear it.

Before they are accepted for a cochlear implant, a patient is assessed by every member of the team, which includes consultant surgeons, hearing therapists, audiologists and speech and language therapists.

As it is major surgery, the team need to be sure the patient is prepared and would benefit from the procedure.

The cochlear implant team at the Princess of Wales Hospital are one of only three in Wales.

They treat patients of all ages from Bridgend to Aberystwyth and some parts of mid-Wales.

Police plea over missing man



Ceri Stokes.
POLICE are appealing to the public for information on the whereabouts of 30-year-old Ceri Stokes, from Guthrie Street in Barry who is wanted for breach of bail conditions and failing to appear at court.

He is said to be white, 5ft 10ins tall, with short brown hair and brown eyes. He is known to have strong connections with the Barry and Penarth areas.

LOCAL PRE-SCHOOL'S GREAT EASTER FUN DAY



COLWINSTON Pre-school had a "fantastic Easter Fun Day" on Monday, and raised over £500 with an Easter bonnet competition, Easter crafts, an Easter egg hunt and a surprise visit from the Easter Bunny himself. The children had a fabulous time!

Pictures by Gemma Griffiths Photography



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Theatre school in *Cats* anniversary celebration

STAGECOACH Theatre Arts celebrated its 25th anniversary in style with an outstanding performance of the world-renowned musical at the NIA, Birmingham.

Andrew Lloyd Webber invited the company to stage it, and gave permission for the extensive arena production, in which 3,000 young performers, from Stagecoach schools, nationally and internationally, took part.

Of those performers, 101 were local children from Stagecoach Bridgend and Cowbridge.

Jonathan and Charlotte, the operatic duo of *Britain's Got Talent* fame, opened the show with an emotional performance to the star-studded crowd of 12,000!

Charlotte has been a Stagecoach student for more than 11 years.

Veronica Bennetts, director of education for Stagecoach, said: "We are so proud of each and every one of our 3,000 students who took part in our anniversary celebra-



ABOVE: Four of the Stagecoach students who took featured roles in the production.

tions."

Peter Brayshaw, the vice-president of operations at The Really Useful Group Limited, attended the show and declared it "A triumph!"

Stagecoach Bridgend and Cowbridge are now enrolling for the summer term and holiday workshops.

Call Helene or Rob on 01446 781454 for further information.

BARRY SCHOOL GROUP'S NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of 'AIAITH', former pupils of Ysgol Sant Baruc, will be on Friday, April 5 at 8pm in the Mount Sorrel, Barry. A spokeswoman said: "Don't worry if you think that your Welsh is a bit rusty – you'll be surprised how much you remember! We all had a great catch-up in our last meeting and it was fantastic to see so many familiar faces."

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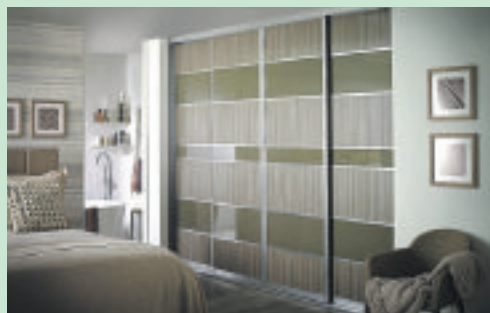
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1st April to 6th May



LEFT: Gimli, who belongs to Maggie from Little Mill Cattery, having a nice stretch - it's an easy life being a cat!

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THE PUBLIC'S CHANCE TO SHOW HOW MUCH THEY CARE

BRITAIN has long been seen as a nation of animal lovers and very soon the great pet owning public has a chance to prove it now that National Pet Month (April 1 - May 6, 2013) is here.

With almost 50 per cent of UK households owning at least one pet, this national celebration offers pet fans across the UK the chance to come together and raise money for their favourite pet charities by staging and attending a wide variety of events.

Now in its 24th year,

National Pet Month offers a lifeline to pet charities throughout the country and sees all kinds of organisations taking part - from nurseries and schools to colleges, workplaces, clubs, churches, community groups, pet stores, veterinary clinics and many others.

There will also be competitions running throughout the campaign, plus special school lesson plans to help youngsters learn about the importance of looking after pets properly.

Last year's fun events included everything from special veterinary open days and sponsored dog walks to bake sales, pet shows, pet fashion parades and special church services for animals and their owners.

Keep fit queen and pet owner Rosemary Conley is among a host of celebrities supporting this year's National Pet Month.

"It's really important for people to own a pet because it makes them think, not just about themselves, but about caring for another being," says pet owning Rosemary, who is lending her support to the campaign for the second year running.

"Pets are a tonic for your health, both mentally and physically," she

adds.

This year's National Pet Month theme is 'Your Pets and You; companions for life' which looks at the companionship side of owning a pet and the health benefits that come with pet ownership.

Phil Sketchley, National Pet Month chairman explains: "Whether you are a toddler or a pensioner, a pet can be a truly wonderful companion, helping to reduce anxiety and instill a sense of calm."

"Scientific research suggests there are numerous associated health benefits of pet ownership which we'll be highlighting during National Pet Month."

He adds: "Pets really do make people's lives happier and healthier and so what better way to repay them than by encouraging people to spread the responsible pet ownership message and help raise cash for pet charities around the UK?"

To say we British love our pets is an understatement. A survey carried out in 2012 on behalf of the PFMA (Pet Food

Manufacturers' Association) proved beyond all doubt just how much we like to share our lives with animals.

It revealed:

- 48 per cent of UK households have at least one pet - that's the equivalent of 13 million households around the country.

- 8 million cats and 8 million dogs share their lives with us in the UK.

- 23 per cent of UK households own at least one dog

- 19 per cent of UK households own at least one cat

- There are approximately 67 million pets in the UK

Animal fans from across the country are asked to show their support for National Pet Month by staging and attending fundraising events for local pet charities, taking part in schools projects and competitions and helping spread the word on important pet ownership issues.

"We know how much we Brits love our pets. Now it's time to show just how much by rais-

ing cash for our favourite pet charities and encouraging others to look after pets responsibly. Join us and together we can make a difference," says Phil Sketchley.

Anyone can register as a supporter on the National Pet Month website for free on www.nationalpetmonth.org.uk where they'll receive a free events pack featuring informa-

tion on NPM's key messages plus posters and tips on how to successfully stage an event.

People can then register an event on the NPM interactive map on www.nationalpetmonth.org.uk/events

Pet fans can follow National Pet Month on Facebook www.facebook.com/NationalPetMonth and on Twitter @NatPetMonthUK

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ABOVE: Button would make a great companion.

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Honours even in local under-9 derby fixture

IN total contrast to the arctic weather the previous week, the Cowbridge under-9s enjoyed glorious sunshine for their local home derby with Bridgend Sports on Easter Sunday.

Eleven of the squad were prised away from their Easter eggs and played two halves in what proved to be a very entertaining and thrilling game.

The game was played with nine-a-side as Bridgend Sports had the bare nine with Cowbridge playing two rolling subs.

The first half saw the Sports take an early lead as they moved the ball well to both sides of the field. However, this early score was cancelled out by a Steffan Evans try, but Cowbridge once again fell behind as the Sports stretched the Cowbridge defence out wide.

Silky running from Ruben Davies once again levelled matters for the home side but Sports pulled ahead through two further tries. Just before half time Robbie Brown crossed the try line to make the half time score 4-3 to Bridgend Sports.

The second half saw both teams going try for try in a tight battle. Both

sides looked to keep the ball alive and some excellent off-loading from the tackle created space for some fine tries to be scored.

Two weaving runs from Ruben Davies resulted in two super tries and, following Cowbridge turning over possession, Akka Guwy squeezed over in the corner in what was an excellent finish.

In the midst of the try scoring Robbie Brown was proving to be a one man wrecking machine for Cowbridge, tackling everything that moved and Rhydian Williams produced a wonderful try saving touchline tackle.

However, the Sports had scored three very good tries of their own in this period and with the score 7-6 to the Sports, the last play of the game was called.

Cowbridge, during this phase of play, showed real composure which was rewarded as Steffan Evans crossed the whitewash to earn a thrilling, well deserved draw.

Squad: Ruben Davies, Will Ryan, Ethan Francis, Lewys Robins, Robbie Brown, Tom Brennan, Rhydian Williams, Akka Guwy, Archie Lloyd, Luke Treadwell and Steffan Evans.

MF

Good news for home buyers!

THE government support for home loans announced in last month's budget has been hailed as a significant step forward for buyers with the two schemes designed to help borrowers who only have a 5 per cent deposit.

The schemes are available to both first time buyers and home-movers and it is hoped that this will encourage lenders to offer better access to low-deposit mortgages.

This announcement, along with increasingly competitive rates being offered by mortgage lenders, should bring new activity to the housing market and, if you aspire to own your own home, may help you to

get a foot on the property ladder.

Before plunging head-long into making an offer on a property however, prospective borrowers should take care to assess the types of mortgages that are available and which is best for them.

A low initial rate may come with a very large fee, or may tie you in on a less competitive rate later on so careful research is essential.

Lenders are very choosy about who they will lend to, so taking steps early on to ensure you have a good credit score can make a big difference.

For tips on how to improve your credit score and for independent, whole of market mortgage advice, contact CBK on 0300 303 8525 or email us: info@cbkwales.co.uk.

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Funding changes for family cases

From April 1, 2013, public funding (previously known as Legal Aid) will not be available for most family disputes.

At a time when personal circumstances are difficult, people going through divorce or separation deserve certainty when it comes to their legal costs.

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Recycling member John Payne

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GEM ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

In Business Update

Suffering exam stress? Then help is at hand

DOES exam stress hold you back? Most of us are able to learn and absorb information well, yet when it comes to being tested, some people suffer from 'exam stress' and don't perform to their potential.

Often stress starts months ahead – not only at exam time. Contributing factors

include bad experience; lack of confidence or low self esteem and when performance in an exam is linked to our sense of worth as a person, it is quite easy to suffer from perfectionism, or the fear of failure.

The good news is hypnotherapy is a powerful tool which can help students feel more at ease ahead of the exam, more focused and able to assimilate information during studying.

Hypnosis can empower students to concentrate using all their resources towards exam success!

For more information, please contact Sue Pitman on 07795 964 066; or cardiffhypnotherapy@gmail.com

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Breaks and excursions for recycled teenagers!

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Whether you wish to join one of our own holidays or excursions, or you wish to go away as a group, talk to us and we will discuss the different options available.

For further information, please see our advertisement or come and have a coffee with us in the Age Concern Coffee Shop, Holton Road, Barry, on a Tuesday morning between 9.30am-12.30pm; or alternatively, call 07906 874876 or 01446 736070 after 6pm.

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Day Trips (April 2013)

Tuesday 9 April
Tintern & Wyke Valley Tour with Lunch.
Depart at 10.30am & Return at 6pm.
£22 pp inclusive of lunch.

Friday 12 April
Evesham & The Blossom Trail.
Wonderful hour through delightful scenery & splendid countryside, taking in the towns & villages of Evesham, Pershore & Broadway.
£26 pp inclusive of lunch & The Blossom Tour. Depart 9.30am & return at 6pm.

Tuesday 16 April
Brecon Mountain Railway & Lunch.
Depart at 10.30am & Return at 5.30pm.
£27 pp inclusive of lunch & Return Journey on the Brecon Mountain Railway.

Friday 26 April
Lunch at The Hi Tide Inn, Porthcawl.
Depart at 11am & Return at 3pm.
£15 pp fully inclusive of Fish & Chips, Bread & Butter & a Cup of Tea/Coffee.

Tuesday 30 April
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Short Breaks

Date Nights Destination Accommodation Board Price pp
1-5 April 4 Weston-S-Mare SandBay DBB £149
Holiday Park

29 April 4 Weston-S-Mare SandBay DBB £159
-3May Holiday Park

13-17 4 Paignton The DBB £269
May Livermead Hotel

27-31 4 Weston-S-Mare SandBay DBB £174
May Holiday Park

10-14 4 Paignton The DBB £279
June Livermead Hotel

17-21 4 Sherbourne The DBB £199
June Sherbourne Hotel

15-19 4 Paignton The DBB £299
July Livermead Hotel

22-26 4 Sherbourne The DBB £219
July Sherbourne Hotel

19-23 4 Paignton The DBB £299
August Livermead Hotel

23-27 4 Sherbourne The DBB £199
September Sherbourne Hotel

21-25 4 Weston-S-Mare SandBay DBB £182
October Holiday Park

** Flashback to the 40's & 50's
18-22 4 Weston-S-Mare SandBay DBB £199
November Holiday Park

** Turkey & Tinsel
T's & C's apply, please see website for details

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TOY AND TRAIN SALE

CARDIFF toy and train sale is on Saturday, April 6, from 10.30am to 3pm at Penarth Leisure Centre, CF64 2NS.

It is now established as one of the most popular and largest shows in the south of the UK.

The venue is highly suitable and most accessible. Cogan Railway Station is virtually alongside the centre and ATW operate a highly frequent service from all directions, making the advice 'travel by train' appropriate.

Road connections

from the city and from the motorway network are also excellent and there is ample free parking at the centre.

A great caterer in Rita Limbrick operates within the show offering superb fare at reasonable prices, and raising funds for charity at the same time.

Few events will offer the range, quality, quantity and value-for-money. Even in the recent difficult years, toy and train collecting has continued to thrive, mainly due to the efforts of the traders to scale their prices to their customers' ability to finance their hobby.

NEXT GREAT SHOW... CARDIFF TOY & TRAIN SALE
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FeelGood Factory opens at Royal Glamorgan Hospital

THE first FeelGood Factory in south Wales has recently opened near the Royal Glamorgan Hospital.

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users to exercise both passively and actively, have been installed in a comfortable, relaxed friendly atmosphere, and can be used, regardless of size or physical ability.

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(Sterling Drive is next to the CAT factory, just off the roundabout at the north end of the Royal Glamorgan Hospital, on the bus route 122 between Cardiff and Tonypanddy)

Out and About with The GEM

Danny Boyle's latest 'en-Trances' you in a mind-bending thriller

DANNY Boyle has slowly and steadily shown that he is one of the finest directors working in cinema today.

Blending high-octane visuals with a strong sense of story, his films always make for a satisfying viewing experience, and now with his stock never higher, thanks to the one-two punch of *Slumdog Millionaire* and *127 Hours*, expectations are huge for his next work.

Trance stars James McAvoy as Simon, an art auctioneer working with underworld boss Franck (Vincent Cassel) to plot the heist of an artwork worth millions. When Simon is knocked unconscious, he loses all memory of where he has stored the artwork, and is taken to a hypnotist (Rosario Dawson); but when they enter Simon's psyche, the lines between truth and fiction blur and the stakes become even bigger than they were

before...

Given that in the last four years Danny Boyle has gone from being an esteemed director to a national treasure (and one who won't accept a knighthood), the hype and expectation surrounding his films now is huge, even if the set-up and execution still remains firmly rooted in Boyle's small in scale but broad in execution ideology.

Re-entering the world of a crime thriller where you can never quite trust the characters and their motivations, a world where he made his breakthrough in *Shallow Grave*, *Trance* is the work of a director who has an unwavering sense of confidence and belief in his own abilities; but rather than turn this into an ego message of filmic proportions, *Trance* sees Boyle near the top of his game – and loving every minute of it.

Kicking things off with a potted history of art heists, Boyle's signature style soon comes into play as fast cuts,

close-ups and handheld cameras all play their part in creating a kinetic feast for the eyes.

With a clean and crisp palette, Boyle takes great delight in playing on the ambiguity of the story and the characters, the use of mirrors and reflections in his shots emphasising that these characters are rarely what they seem, and, as you would expect, the film looks absolutely superb.

There are few directors who can create such ragged beauty on a cinema screen and Boyle is one of them (if rumours of a seat at the 007 directing table are true, imagine that James Bond film!). The film is a progression of wonderfully framed shots that are simply stunning.

With the story weighing heavily on the central threesome of James McAvoy, Vincent Cassel and Rosario Dawson, their performances are all up to the task.

McAvoy finds himself put through the wringer somewhat as the man whose memory (or lack of it) could have fatal consequences, and while showing the vulnerability of a man in this position, he also shows the hidden layers that suggest more is afoot.

The same can be said of Dawson, playing what in normal hands would be a character caught in the middle of some dastardly deeds but here, with a suggestive look, her motives are constantly under scrutiny, either a puppeteer or just a fly caught in the spider's web.

Cassel's character too, is more than the sum of the parts, a crook but one that in his hands goes from being a player to being played and back again, his mask of control slipping as events unfold.

Occasional Boyle collaborator John Hodge (he also did the screen-



by GARETH JAMIESON

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plays for, among others, *Trainspotting* and *The Beach*) does a great job of adapting Joe Ahearne's original script (it was made as a TV movie in 2001), bringing a realism and depth to proceedings, while never letting the twisty-turny nature of the story overpower the film.

It's most definitely a film that will stand up to repeat viewings, as you find yourself questioning what is real and what is suggestion, and with a kicker of an ending that ties the story together nicely, while still keeping you on your toes, *Trance* is a film that is most definitely worth being hypnotised by.

VERDICT - Striking while the iron is most definitely hot, *Trance* is another success for Danny Boyle. The mind-bending story keeps you engaged throughout, as do the fine performances from a wonderful cast, but Boyle's visual sense has never been more wonderfully attuned than here; an incredible piece of work. *Highly recommended.*

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: *Inception* (2010), *Shallow Grave* (1994)

Ty Hafan lottery winners

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery.

● £2000: 397990.

● The rollover, which now stands at £11,000 was not won this week.

● £10: 370559; 362990; 839656; 881334; 114772; 697217; 533633; 290628; 727555; 617566; 736739; 693895; 269095; 302271; 696034; 958271; 131546; 148539; 210651; 260191.

● £5: 972109; 861760; 207178; 825132; 497399; 253410; 247323; 834240; 216824; 573411; 919095; 728883; 641034;

918923; 553414; 386101; 407456; 460944; 801506; 240036; 767095; 932957; 712758; 725895; 136823; 136423; 615341; 634765; 651971; 358415; 754599; 370403; 420539; 563708; 958794; 273337; 654851; 870323; 273420; 279827; 636233; 762956.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please telephone 029 2067 2062.

Councillors' Surgery

WARD councillors Fred Johnson, Neil Moore and Anne Moore will be holding a surgery in Cadoxton Moors community centre, Cadoxton, on Saturday, April 6, from 10.30am to 11.30am; all are welcome.

Discover Bridgend's past

FAMILIES can discover more about Bridgend county borough's rich and fascinating history at a special event at Pencoe College on Saturday, April 6, between 10am and 1.30pm.

The free 'This is YOUR Heritage 2013' event is being supported by Reach, Bridgend County Borough Council's rural development programme, and will show what local life was like throughout the ages.

An interactive timeline, fun workshops, displays and talks from local history groups, traditional craft stalls and activities will all create an interesting morning that delves into Bridgend county borough's past.

For further information contact Nicola Lewis on 01656 815080 or email Nicola.lewis3@bridgend.gov.uk.

You can also find out more about local history at www.bridgendsheritage.co.uk

Meeting postponed

COWBRIDGE Royal British Legion has cancelled its meeting on April 9 and it will take place on April 29 at the Lesser Hall at 7.30 pm.

Floral Society

BARRY Floral Society meets on April 9, when Mrs Delyth Price will give a demonstra-

tion, 'Colours Rich and Glorious'.

Meetings are held at the St Nicholas Hall, St Nicholas Road, Barry, at 2.15 pm.

New members are always welcome.

Cavatina Singers 'Dial M for Music'

AT a well attended afternoon concert in the newly-renovated All Saints' Church, Penarth, Cavatina Singers dialled 'M for Music' as their concert theme.

They were ably conducted by their music director Victoria Pilley and accompanied on the piano by Philip May.

The choir was supported by soloists and friends currently studying at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

The essence of the programme was that all pieces related one way or another to the letter 'M', be it the name of the composer (Mozart) or the type of work, such as madrigals or motets.

The concert began with the choir singing 'Three Madrigals' by Diemer, a French version of the Lord's Prayer ('Notre Pere') by Maurice Durufle and 'Dirait-on' by Morten Lauridsen.

The choir was fortunate in having the services of two soloists, Beth Moxon (alto) and Angharad Watkeys (soprano), from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

Beth sang the Welsh piece 'Gwynfyd', followed by Angharad singing 'Adieu notre petite table' by Massenet and 'Madame Noy' by Bliss.

Both soloists were

enthusiastically received by the audience.

Cavatina sang a variety of other pieces, which included Bruckner's 'Locus Iste', Mozart's 'Ave Verum Corpus', and Morley's 'April is in My Mistress' Face'.

Beth was accompanied by the choir in Mozart's 'Laudate Dominum' and both Beth and Angharad sang a number of other solo pieces during the programme.

The concert concluded with the choir and soloists singing Vivaldi's 'Magnificat' RV611, followed by generous applause from the audience.

NL



NEW GROUP

FRIDAY

Dinas Powys 9.30am
Opening 5th April 2013
The Cabin by Swimming Pool, Hebron Hall
Sarah - 07525 852288

MONDAY

Barry 4.30 & 6.30pm
The Tadross Hotel, Holton Road (next to Bassett Park)
Lorraine - 01446 407002

Cwm Talwg Pub 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Sewern Avenue
Wiggy - 07970 450694

Penarth 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Elfed Avenue United Church, Elfed Avenue
Nia - 07793 885581

TUESDAY

Barry - 5.30pm
Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, Trinity Street
Joanne - 01446 404897

Llantwit Major 9.30am
Catholic Church, Ham Lane East
Helen - 01446 750738

Barry RFC 7.30pm
Merthyr Dyfan Road
Teresa - 07889 828401

Llantwit Major 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Our Lady & St Iltyd Church (Catholic)
Ham Lane East
Helen - 01446 750738

Sully - 6.30pm
The Old School South Road
Niki - 01446 740394

WEDNESDAY

Barry 4.45 & 6.45pm
St. Francis Millennium Centre, Park Road, Porth-y-Castell
Annmarie - 01446 736534

Barry - 6.00pm
Methodist Church Church Road
Joanne - 01446 404897

Penarth 9.30am & 11.30am
All Saints Church Hall Victoria Square
Tracy - 07894 275853

Penarth 5.30pm & 7.30pm
All Saints Church Hall Victoria Square
Tracy - 07894 275853



THURSDAY

Barry - 5.30pm
Highlight Park Community Centre, Barry
Annmarie - 01446 736534

Cowbridge - 9.30am
Cowbridge Rugby Club
Rob - 07708 941279

Dinas Powys 5.30pm & 7.30pm
The Cabin by swimming pool, Hebron Hall
Sarah - 07525 852288

Barry - 10.15am
St Helen's Church Hall Wyndham Street
Niki - 01446 740394

Cowbridge 5.30pm & 7.30pm
The Little Shop of Calm, Westgate
Rob - 07708 941279.



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BARRY MALE VOICE CHOIR PRACTISING THEIR DUTCH!

EXCITING times lie ahead once again for members of the Barry Male Voice Choir.

Following a well-deserved rest from engagements after their 110th celebratory year, the choir is once again on a surge of concert activity.

March 1 heralded this spring resurgence with a concert for the BP pensioners at the Mount Sorrel Hotel.

This was followed by concerts at St Mary's Church, Barry in aid of



Barry Mayor Les Sword's local charities, and a concert at St Peter's Church, Dinas Powis.

Both these concerts

also involved the Barry Ladies Choir.

Holton Road School Choir and St Andrew's Church in Wales School Choir also contributed

to the melodious harmonies of the occasions.

Another European visit beckons. Choir secretary Richard King, explained: "Last year's visit to France was in search of wine."

"This year's visit to Gouda, Holland, is in search of the cheese. We hope to have a good time and look forward to sharing in the 90th celebrations of the Mannenkoor Gouda's Liedertafel, for which we shall be singing a song in Dutch."

The choir has been very fortunate in having the services of Jenn Edwards and her hus-

band, tenor Bruce, in making the arrangements.

Bruce is confident that visits to a cheese factory and brewery, and the hospitality of the Gouda choir will ensure that the visit is fulfilling in every way!

Jenny, who has many family members living in Gouda, has also been assisting the choir in getting to grips with the difficult guttural pronunciation when singing in Dutch.

In the photograph (above), the choir is performing at the St Peter's concert

Gareth Jones

VALE MAYOR'S COFFEE MORNING

The Mayor of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's charity coffee morning is being held in the Corporate Suite, Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, on Tuesday, April 9, from 10.30am to 12 noon.

All proceeds will go to the above charity.

RHS garden designer brings 'Artful Bodger' to Cardiff flower show

LOCAL garden designer Anthea Guthrie has designed 14 RHS award-winning gardens in total, and in April (19-21) she returns to the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Flower Show in Cardiff with a wild woodland garden, in a collaboration with Heronsbridge School.

The 'Artful Bodger's Garden' is inspired by the beautiful woodland around the school, where lawyer turned garden designer Anthea has taught for the past five years.

The woodland garden highlights the ancient craft of 'bodging', where the bodger would buy a stand of trees from the landowner and cut and make chair legs and other forestry products.

The bodger would build a 'bodger's hovel' to shelter from the worst of the weather, with the tools of his trade around him, including a pole lathe for turning the chair legs.

Show visitors will be able to walk through the



ABOVE: Anthea Guthrie.

plants such as garlic chives, which grow profusely in the area.

Anthea said: "This will be my 14th RHS show, four of them with the students at Heronsbridge who get so much from working with the soil. The garden reflects the beautiful woods where I ride and walk, and demonstrates how an interest in horticulture can be developed with youngsters."

Anthea will also be in the talks and demonstrations marquee with 'A Learning Curve - Gardening with Children', a talk about the inspirational youngsters she works with in Heronsbridge.

YMCA courses for young photographers

BARRY YMCA will be offering two new courses in photography for the next school term.

Photography*Jnr is designed for children aged four-10 years old, and for the 11-16 group. Cameras will be supplied, or students can bring their own!

Spaces are strictly limited to 10 for each group. Sessions will be run every Tuesday afternoon in term time. Age four-10, 4pm-4.50pm, and age 11-16, 5pm-5.50pm

Children under the age of eight will need to be accompanied by a parent/carer or guardian at all times.

Sessions are £6.50, which includes use of cameras and all creative materials. Contact Natasha on photography_jnr@yahoo.co.uk

'German Great Escape' remembered at Island Farm this weekend

VISITORS to the 'This is Your Heritage' event at the Pencoed Campus of Bridgend College this Saturday, April 6, will have the opportunity of meeting members of the recently-formed 'Hut 9 Preservation Group' and can learn all about the German Great Escape in March 1945.

The chairman of the group, Dr Jonathan Hicks, said: "The group was formed last December and comprises local historians and archaeologists."

"Our aim is to preserve Hut 9 and obtain Heritage Lottery Funding to restore it, and then open it to school visits and the general public."

"Our last open day in September attracted hundreds of visitors from far and wide."

"We are taking part in this annual event which aims to showcase the heritage of the county of Bridgend."

"Several living historians in WW2 uniforms will be on hand to chat with the public about Hut 9, the sole remaining building of the Island Farm prisoner of war camp. We will also be displaying artefacts from the camp."

Admission is free and there will also be three talks for the public to enjoy - on Hut 9 by local expert Brett Exton, the history of Kenfig, and St John's House.

Doors open at 9.30 am and the event closes at 1.30 pm.

FREE admission
Parking £2.50

Bryngarw House and Country Park
Brynmor, Bridgend CF32 5UU

SATURDAY
13th April
11am - 5pm

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WI CELEBRATION BOOK CONTINUES ON ITS WAY



THE Celebration Book being created to mark the 90th anniversary of the Glamorgan Federation of WIs continues travelling around the Vale.

It will record the wide variety of interests, talents and activities of over 4,500 members in 108 institutes in the old Glamorgan area.

Mrs Jean Thomas, the longest serving member of Llanmaes WI, handed the book to Mrs Jean Swift and the enthusiastic committee of Llantwit Major WI recently.

Llanmaes WI meet at Llanmaes Church Hall at 7.30pm on the second Tuesday of the month and Llantwit Major WI meet at Llantwit Hall at 7.30pm on the first Thursday of the month.

Both institutes welcome new members to share their friendship and interests.

Llanmaes WI pass the celebration book on to Llantwit Major.

WHAT'S ON - in brief

Evening of Clairvoyance

JOIN Leah Bond and Moya O'Dwyer for an evening of clairvoyance at Barry Spiritualist Centre, Buttrills Road, Barry, on Monday, April 8, at 7pm - £4 entry on door.

Advice from RNID HAVE you any form of hearing impediment?

An advisor from the Royal National Institute for the Deaf will be available to give advice and support on services available.

This session will take place at The Senior Health Shop, 38, Holton Road on Thursday, April 11, 10am - 12 midday. This session will be very informal.

The Ageing Well Project is holding a series of health topics and information sessions as it is impor-

tant to get information out to the over 50s.

How better than having a chat over a cup of tea or coffee? Contact 01446 732385 for further information, or just come along on the morning.

GF

FocusBARRY meeting THE next FocusBARRY meeting will be on April 12 at the Barry West End Club at 7pm.

Members, supporters and guests are welcome to attend, contribute and to take part during the discussion sessions.

We are going to receive a presentation about the history of Barry Island, discuss an initiative called the Barry Ideasbank and have a general discussion of the current local issues from around the town.

Jeffrey Heathfield secretary, FocusBARRY

New Seat Toledo is a strong contender in family car market

by TIM SAUNDERS



The Seat Toledo 1.6TDI SE.

WE live in extremely straitened times where most countries, including the UK, continue to accumulate debt.

The prospect of a career for life has become virtually non-existent. Most of us feel that there's less money, with which we have to do more.

Consequently, the hard-up motorist craves a good deal, and Seat, realises this. It has responded with its Toledo, the family hatchback priced from under £13,000 to just below £18,000, and its diesel model also happens to be super economical.

Thank goodness - perhaps life is not so bad after all. Named after the historic Spanish city, this is an extremely sensible car for our times. With its clean lines, it is one to be proud of, and the 1.6TDI SE test model was significantly helped by its burgundy finish.

Sharing the same chassis as the Skoda Rapid, which I tested only a few weeks ago, both models clearly share a good deal.

This comes as no surprise as Seat is owned by Volkswagen, which also owns Skoda.

The rear wash/wipe on both models has been borrowed from the Audi A1. The washer is built into the wiper and effectively projects a jet of spray across the window, unlike any other wiper I have come across.

Buyers pay a premium for such innovative features on the Audi, too. Inside, the dashboard is very similar to the Rapid, with the same layout and controls.

Then there's the good build quality and the hardwearing interior trim. Its seats, however, could do with being more supportive, especially over longer journeys. Generally it has a

competent, if bland, ride.

There's a folding armrest in the centre of the cabin, which is useful for long motorway jaunts when gear changes aren't required.

At speed, the Toledo does buffet a bit in the wind but this is quickly forgotten when realising that this little gem returns over 50mpg at 70mph.

Engine stop/start helps this model easily cover 700 miles on a tank of fuel. It's pretty gutsy, too, hitting 60mph from standstill in just over 10 seconds. The five-speed box is as reasonable as you might expect; I don't have a bad word to say about it.

Families need a massive boot and they won't be disappointed with the

550 litres of luggage space, as you can see in the video at testdrives.biz. If more room is required, the rear seats fold down and the centre rear armrest conceals a hole for long, awkward objects such as skis or piping.

Luxuries include electric front windows, electrically adjustable wing mirrors and air conditioning.

"Seat will be hoping that the Toledo can help dent the sales figures of popular established hatchbacks like the Ford Focus, while pinning back newer entries in to this market such as the Volvo V40," writes Parkers, the car experts.

"While it may have the appearance of a saloon, this latest version of the Toledo comes with a large, wide-opening rear hatch."

The Toledo, just like the Skoda Rapid, makes an ideal family proposition.

2013 onwards - New price range: £12,495 - £17,840; Economy: 64mpg; 0-60mph: 10.1secs; Top speed: 118mph; Power: 103bhp.

Watch the video at www.testdrives.biz

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RESIDENT IN POTHOLE PLEA TO THE COUNCIL

by TIM
CHAPMAN

A VALE resident says urgent action is needed to repair potholes and damage on the Aberthaw to Aubrey Arms road – or better still, a complete resurfacing.

Mr Sam Smith, well known in the local area as the owner of Sam Smith Travel, makes the daily journey from the village of Llanbetherly to the A48, on his way to Cowbridge, but says the trip is becoming something of an assault course.

He told The GEM: "Drivers are having to take evasive action along the road due to damage to the sides of it and because of the potholes. Some patching up has been tried but this has now eroded.

"The road conditions on the approach to Llanbetherly, caused by a combination of pot holes, road degradation and an enormous amount of mud and chippings washed onto the road by recent storms, are making the



Mr Sam Smith said he is concerned that potholes on the Aberthaw to Aubrey Arms road, and on the road down to the village of Llanbetherly, might cause damage to people's tyres.



approach to the village something of an assault course.

"The road has been in this condition for weeks and remains untouched.

"The road to the Aubrey Arms is now frankly very dangerous, with large holes along many of the verges, and in the carriageway, which cause vehicles to either swerve or face damaging their wheels."

Although the road is situated in the Vale's picturesque countryside, Mr Smith said it takes a real pounding.

He explained that it is used by heavy tractors, farm machinery, and heavy lorries on their way to and from Aberthaw Power Station

and the cement works.

It is also used by commuters on their way to Cowbridge, Bridgend and Cardiff.

Mr Smith believes that current, major work at Sycamore Cross is a "waste of money", and would have been better spent on resurfacing the Aberthaw-Aubrey Arms road.

He said it was disappointing for local villagers in the Vale to see such a huge project on their doorstep when they were having to endure poor road surfaces.

Coun Jeff James confirmed that Mr Smith had raised issues over road conditions with him on a number of occasions, and told The GEM: "I have diligently reported each and every complaint to the highways section with some success.

"I know that the 'Big Fill initiative means that

Rhoose ward will have its chance to receive intensive repairs.

"However, I am aware that some of the roads are deteriorating beyond just filling pot holes, and minor resurfacing is not going to address the kind of damage that Mr Smith describes.

"I have previously asked Mr Loosemore, highways maintenance manager, to investigate the poor state of the road from Pancross to the Aubrey Arms junction."

Coun James emphasised that money used at Sycamore Cross could not be used elsewhere, because that money had come in the form of a grant to the council for that particular purpose.

The Vale Council pointed out that the road was regularly inspected.

A spokeswoman said: "The road leading from the A48 at the Aubrey

Arms to the B4265 at Aberthaw is inspected four times a year in accordance with the highway maintenance management code of practice, during which highway defects liable to compromise the safety of the public are identified and categorised for repair.

"A number of repairs have recently been carried out along this section of road and localised resurfacing works are also planned in the coming months, funded by the local government borrowing initiative."

The spokeswoman added: "The improvement works on the A48 Sycamore Cross were funded by the Welsh Government as part of their National Transport Delivery Plan for 2012/13 and cannot be transferred to highway maintenance schemes."

New programme aims to promote benefits of work

AN innovative programme that aims to tackle long-term unemployment and promote the benefits of work has been given the backing of Bridgend County Borough Council's cabinet.

The council is to team up with four other local authorities in south Wales to develop the 'Worklessness Change Programme'.

The programme is being funded by the Welsh Government and the European Social Fund and is led by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.

It aims to change attitudes towards worklessness by developing a shared culture across organisations that encourages staff to support people to recognise the importance of work and how it will improve their health and wellbeing.

The Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) cabinet member for communities, Coun Phil White, said: "We are delighted to support any scheme that looks to improve employment and health in the county borough. This new partnership programme will promote all the benefits that people gain from being in work."

"In addition to the obvious economic benefits, working can also improve an individual's health and wellbeing, stopping them from being inactive and improving their prospects for the future."

New plan is agreed

A PLAN setting out BCBC's vision and priorities for the next four years has been agreed by cabinet members.

The Corporate Plan 2013 – 2017 sets out six improvement priorities for the council, focusing on developing the local economy, driving up educational achievement, working with children and families to tackle problems early, helping vulnerable people to stay independent and tackling health issues and encouraging healthy lifestyles, as well as making best use of the council's resources in the difficult financial climate.

Council Leader Coun Mel Nott OBE, said: "This is a plan which sets out our vision for our county borough for the coming years.

"We will continue to deliver a very wide range of services, but after consultation and consideration, we have prioritised the areas that we believe will have the biggest impact on improving lives in the borough – the economy, the health and education and making this a great place in which to live, learn, work and play.

"On its own the council can make improvements, but to realise our vision we need everyone in the borough to work together – the council, citizens, businesses, communities and other organisations. Our plan is ambitious and while public spending constraints and the weak economy will undoubtedly be challenging we are determined to improve lives within the borough over the next four years."

Junior schools are to merge

A PROPOSAL to merge two Bridgend junior schools which share the same site has been approved by the Minister for Education and Skills.

Three objections were received against BCBC's plan to close Bryntirion Junior School and transfer its pupils to neighbouring Llangewydd Juniors, meaning the decision was passed to the Welsh Government.

Minister Leighton Andrews AM

approved the proposal, saying he was "satisfied that this proposal is sound in educational, financial and strategic terms and that it will provide a sustainable school for this locality, including facilities for pupils with special educational needs".

It means that from September 1, 2013, the existing Bryntirion school buildings will become part of the Llangewydd Junior School site to create a single, larger school.

The proposal was put forward to address the decline in numbers of pupils going to Bryntirion Junior School, which has resulted in a major and growing budget deficit.

The average level of funding required for each pupil at Bryntirion has been £5,467, compared to an average of £3,314 at other schools in Bridgend county borough.

Council Leader, Coun Mel Nott OBE, said: "I welcome the Minister's decision and his agreement that this will create a larger, sustainable and more inclusive school.

"However, I also know this has caused some anxiety for the local community so I want to stress again why we are choosing to do this.

"The quality of education at Bryntirion has never been in any doubt, but with more parents continuing to exercise their choice and send children to different schools, Bryntirion Juniors faced a severe funding situation which does not make the school viable.

"Our priority must now be about supporting pupils and staff to make this transition as smooth as possible. One of the things we plan to do is to extend the extra-curricular activities at Llangewydd to those children attending Bryntirion prior to the schools merging in September.

"This should benefit all pupils and help them to adjust ahead of the two schools operating as one."

Praise for Pencoed's progress

A REPORT praising the positive progress at Pencoed Comprehensive has been welcomed by BCBC cabinet members.

Estyn inspectors have paid monitoring visits to the school since its last inspection in spring 2010. Their latest report highlights its good progress and confirms it is no longer in the 'in need of significant improvement' category.

Cabinet members heard how the school has 'significantly strengthened' its focus on improving standards and that there is now a much greater emphasis on accountability, challenge and support across all levels of the school from classroom teachers through to the governing body.

The improvements have already brought about a big improvement in key stage 4 performance with the percentage of pupils achieving 5 A* - C grade GCSEs (or equivalent), including maths and English, moving from 45 per cent in 2011 to 58 per cent in 2012, placing the school above the family, local authority and Wales averages.

Coun Huw David, cabinet member for children and young people, said: "This is tremendous news for the whole school.

"Pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers can feel really proud of the progress being made at Pencoed."

HORACE'S AWARD

CONTINUED
FROM PAGE 1

And really, this book is a combined elegy and love letter to Gwyneth. They married in 1950 and celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary in 2010, the year she died.

It was in that year that Horace started writing the book.

However, although they were married at the age of 30, they had met at the age of 16, in 1936, and it was love at first sight.

The war intervened. Some couples married in haste, but Horace and Gwyneth decided to wait. It means that Gwyneth was the focus of Horace's life for 77 of his 93 years, and it is very much their story.

Horace has a great memory for the details of his life. He was born in Tondy and grew up in Aberkenfig.

His home there was one of three cottages in "the middle of nowhere". He said: "There was no running water, just the river and a spring in the next field."

To this day, the house is called 'Drake's Cottage'.

His years growing up are chronicled in detail. He was a promising rugby player, as was his brother, but some dispute between Bridgend RFC and Ogmore Vale seems

to have hindered his progress.

He joined the railways and, when war came, he was called up to work on trains supplying the war effort.

He was posted first to Iraq and Persia (now Iran), and then found himself supporting the Allies as they advanced through Italy.

After the war, he was demobbed and returned to working on the railways, where he stayed for the rest of his working life, becoming an engine driver.

In that capacity, he once had the honour of driving the Royal train when the Queen visited south Wales!

It is fair to say that the growing up section, and the war memoirs, take up the bulk of the book. Horace comes across as a modest man who does not feel comfortable talking about himself.

The rest of the book focuses on family life, and his obvious pride in his children and, in turn, their children.

His sense of family shines through the book and, given the help he has received from his family, the feeling is clearly reciprocal!

Once Upon a Time in Aberkenfig is available from Horace Drake, who can be contacted on 01656 645072

Nursery staff help out local animal sanctuary

STAFF at Just Learning in Bridgend, part of the Busy Bees nursery group, gave up their time at the weekend to support a local charity, animal sanctuary Jemima's Place.

Staff (led by nursery manager Ceri Kinsey) divided their time between fundraising on the High Street and getting their hands dirty on site at the sanctuary.

Ceri Kinsey said: "I'm very proud of my team. To give up their weekend and raise £500 for Jemima's Place is admirable. Working and being part of a wider community is really important to us here at the nursery.

"We want to encour-

age our children to take an active part in their surroundings, and what better way to do so than by leading the way.

"Getting our hands dirty at the sanctuary was actually a lot of fun, and it was really

rewarding talking to people in the street and raising awareness about this very worthy charity.

"People say never work with children or animals – but we wouldn't have it any other way!"

MP's portrait goes on show

BRIDGEND MP Madeleine Moon has given her support to a new exhibition called 'Facing the Light: Portraits for Parkinson's' by the artist Timothy Cumming.

The exhibition comprises more than 100 portraits of people whose lives are connected to Parkinson's, whether working towards finding a cure, supporters of the cause or those living with the condition. A portrait of Mrs Moon is included in the exhibition.

Mrs Moon said: "Parkinson's is a devastating diagnosis for individuals and their families and as yet, there is no cure. In comparison

to other conditions, research into Parkinson's is underfunded, but research is vital if a cure is to be identified; funding is essential.

"I was therefore delighted for my portrait to be included."

The paintings can be viewed and purchased as signed limited edition prints online at www.facingthelight.org, where donations can also be made.

The show is at gallery@oxo, Oxo Tower Wharf on London's South Bank, April 10 – 14, and admission is free.

GEM Note: Mrs Moon's portrait is on offer at £340, £15 more than David Miliband's.

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YOUR CHANCE TO SHARE THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Neighbourhood Watch
NEW PCSOs – The two new PCSOs in the Pyle Neighbourhood Policing Team were introduced by Sergeant Jason Jenkins at the recent PACT meeting held in the Talbot Community Centre, Kenfig Hill.

Huw Tyler started working for South Wales Police in 2010 as a licensing assistant based in Cardiff Bay Police Station. This involved managing the licensing database for South Wales Police, as well as gathering and analysing crime data related to licensed premises.

In 2012, Huw jumped at the opportunity of becoming a Police Community Support Officer and is thoroughly enjoying the diversity of the role.

The other new PCSO is Richard Hopkins who worked for the Welsh Assembly (formerly the Welsh Office) in Cardiff from 1984 to 2006. During this time he worked in a number of different divisions becoming involved with South Wales Police in 2004 as a seconded working from HQ as the

UK's only generic Special Constable recruitment officer. Richard is in his seventh year as a PCSO and prior to joining the Pyle neighbourhood team, worked in Barry from 2006 to 2009 and Aberkenfig and Garw Valley from 2009 to 2012.

Sgt Jenkins also revealed that the ever popular Nerys Lloyd is back from her travels and will be joining Huw and Richard patrolling our streets again in the near future.

If you have any concerns or issues you would like to discuss with the Neighbourhood Policing Team either go to the Police surgery, which is at 11am on Thursday, April 18 or the next PACT meeting, which will be at 6.30pm on Thursday, May 16. Both will be held in the library at the Pyle Life Centre. If you are unable to attend these meetings, you can telephone either Sergeant Jason Jenkins on 07584 004254, Huw Tyler on 07825 262498 or Richard Hopkins on 07584 004 664 at any time and they will deal with it in the strictest confidence.

Kenfig Hill RFC
KENFIG HILL RFC Supporters' Club is holding a pie and



COMMUNITY NEWS from KENFIG HILL AND PYLE

by **Richard Sims**

Telephone: 01656 746840

Mobile: 07802 439679

E-Mail: richardsims@talktalk.net

chips afternoon on Saturday, April 20, at 12.30pm. It coincides with the Mules – Tondur rugby match.

Further entertainment will be provided by top comedian, Jeff Alvey. Tickets for what promises to be a great afternoon's entertainment, are just £6. During the afternoon, the junior section will be running a raffle to help raise funds for their tour to Barnstaple in May. This will be quite an undertaking by the junior section, as I understand that at least 350 plan to make the trip. Talbot Community Centre

EASTER at the Talbot – Following a delicious turkey lunch on Good Friday, diners were treated to an Easter bonnet parade.

Although there were fewer bonnets on display this year, the ones worn were great. For their efforts it was decided to give prizes to the best four chosen by the diners and these went to: Val Jones (first), Joannie Burgess (second), Jean Thompson (third), and Ruth Ruck (fourth).

Mynydd Cynffig Junior School PUPIL of the Week – Congratulations to the following pupils who were nominated for impressing the staff at the school last week: Chloe Parry – class 1, Victoria Franklyn – class 2, Dylan Phillips – class 3, Ffion Clarke – class 4, Nia David – class 5, Ben Mulholland – class 6 and Joshua Hughes class 7. The headteacher's award went to George Buckley – class 6.



Ruth Ruck, Joannie Burgess, Val Jones and Jean Thompson.

Bridgend & District Schools Rugby

MANY congratulations to the school 15-a-side rugby team, who won the IM Williams Cup at the South Wales Police Ground in Bridgend.

In a very entertaining final they defeated Pencoe Primary School 21 – 14. Although Pencoe Primary started well, taking an early lead following an interception, tries by Liam Evans, Alex Underhill and Jack Davies, all converted by Ben Evans, gave the school a 21 – 7 lead with only 10 minutes to go.

However, Pencoe finished strongly, scoring another converted try and only resolute defending in the closing stages saw the school claim the Bridgend Schools Cup for the sixth time since 1972.

This all followed a gruelling semi-final earlier in the week when

the school narrowly beat Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg bro Ogwr by 7 – 5, thanks to an excellent try by Jack Davies, which was converted by Ben Evans.

The winning squad included Ben Evans (captain), Liam Evans, Thomas Rees, Todd Hind, Kieran Thomas, Connor John, Oliver Roberts, Ryan Evans, Rhys Perry, Alex Underhill, Jack Davies, Cai Williams, Ewan Orchard, Codi Pritchard, Callum Hill, Dafydd Jones and George Buckley.

Schools Cross Country
WELL done to the 11 pupils who represented the school at the Bridgend Schools Cross-Country Race at Cynffig Comprehensive School last week.

George Buckley ran in the year-5 and -6 boys' race coming 27th, Emmi Joy and Eloise Abraham-Jones competed in the year-5 and -6 girls' race, coming 27th and 38th respectively.

Ewan Flower, Owain Pugh, Thomas Attwood, Jude Abraham-Jones and Matthew Briggs participated in the year-3 and -4 boys race com-

ing 20th, 21st, 36th, 42nd and 57th respectively.

Lowri Powis, Lexi Thompson and Patricia Davies competed in the year-3 and -4 girls race coming 11th, 32nd and 55th respectively. The next race is on Saturday April 27 at Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen (formerly Ogmere Comprehensive School) starting at 10am.

Road Safety Challenge 2013
Congratulations to the school year-5 team of Mark Underhill, Emily Walters, Olivier Davies and Jack Davies who represented the school in this year's Road Safety Challenge against primary schools from the Porthcawl and Cynffig cluster, gaining a very creditable fourth place.

Kenfig Hill Wellbeing Centre ACTIVITIES – The activities being held by the Mental Health Matters at the Talbot Community Centre, Prince

Road, Kenfig Hill on Wednesday, April 10 will be a photography workshop with Valley & Vale from 2pm to 3pm, a talk by PCSO Huw Tyler from the Neighbourhood Policing Team from 3pm to 4pm and 'Let's Get Quizzical' from 3pm to 4pm.

This will also be a great afternoon when everyone is welcome to enjoy themselves in a friendly environment with a cup of coffee and join in the activities.

Charity dance
A charity dance is being held at the OCLP Club in Bryntirion on April 19, featuring Dave Riley, playing and singing 60s and rock and roll music, starting at 7.30pm.

Entrance is £5 on the door, with all proceeds going to the Sandville Self Help Centre.

Volunteers busy during Hospital Radio Week



ABOVE: Handing out leaflets to visitors to the hospital.

VOLUNTEERS were busy in the Princess of Wales last week during Hospital Broadcasting Week.

Press officer Sally Hyde, who is also the hospital radio station librarian, said: "The week was a great success with a number of high profile interviews."

"There was a studio open day, which impressed a lot of people with our fantastic set up and generated a number of requests for music to be played on air."

"We were also able to give out leaflets and we hope this will bring in quite a few new recruits to swell our numbers."



ABOVE: Sally Hyde (left) with presenter Haydn, and Sheila, who tours the wards, collecting requests.



COMMUNITY NEWS

TREOES, LLANGAN & ST MARY HILL

Your local correspondent is Nancy Davidge, "Tynewydd", Llangan. (01656) 860303

Young at Heart

ON Thursday of last week (March 28), members of the Young at Heart Club deserted the hall and travelled the short distance to Kenfig for lunch at the Prince of Wales Inn.

Landlord, Gareth Maund, gave an interesting talk on the history of the inn which dates back to the 15th century.

Its location within the ancient borough of Kenfig is both of historical and commercial value to the locality throughout the ages.

Previously called 'Ty Newydd Tavern', it was renamed in its present form during the late 18th century in honour of George, Prince of Wales, who, in 1820, was crowned George IV.

The area is overlooking the buried city of Kenfig, engulfed in the

ever-shifting sands of the 13th century, but now a magnificent pool situated in the midst of fabulous dunes.

The upstairs room at the Prince of Wales Inn was the guild hall, now known as the town hall, and is accessed via an external stairway to the main building.

The long room has been in continuous usage for centuries and it was within this very room that the burgesses exercised their rights granted by the Kenfig Charters.

My thanks to Gareth Maund and his assistants for a most enjoyable visit and to the three club stalwarts, Anne, Marje and Barbara. Thank you.

Saron Chapel
THIS year's Easter service was well attended with a happy atmosphere, conducted by the Rev Richard Roberts.

Pupils get a feel for jazz performance

THE Porthcawl Jazz Festival is approaching, and pupils from the four primary schools in Porthcawl were in the mood last week.

Flautist and composer Eddie Parker, of the Eddie Parker Quartet, gave over 120 year-6 pupils from West Park, Porthcawl, Nottage and Newton Primaries a jazz taster session, using the hall at Nottage Primary, kindly offered by the head Mrs S O'Hallaran.

Pupils sang and played along to a story of a dragon, narrated captivantly by Eddie, creating a real fusion of music, song and story.

In the session, pupils composed interweaving melodies on xylophones, glockenspiels, drums, guitars, brass and woodwind instruments, as well as using a wide range of percussion. These tunes were then woven skilfully into the story of the dragon.

The session was organised by Coun Newton-Williams and Coun John Bunker, the chair of this year's

Porthcawl Jazz.

Mr A Thorne, head at Newton, commented that the session "gave the pupils an amazing insight into the magical nature of music".

All four schools would like to pass on their thanks to Eddie Parker and the organising committee of the Porthcawl Jazz festival for organising such a fantastic session

Bridge results

THE latest results for Bridgend Bridge Club are as follows:

Wednesday March 27: First, Andrew Scott and Liam Sheridan (62 per cent); second, Kevin Maddox and John Beard (58 per cent); third, David Bowen and David Crompton (56 per cent).

PENCOED RFC BLOW AWAY BRYNAMMAN

PENCOED were swiftly out of the blocks and dominated the opening quarter against Brynamman.

A high tackle on Pencoed outside half Marc Davies gave him a kicking opportunity and Davies duly obliged from 40 metres.

The Pencoed scrum, as has been the case for most of the season, was in the ascendancy, and took two early heads.

The scrum was the platform for the first try, No8 Gareth Prentice releasing scrum half James Donovan down the blindside, with Donovan timing his pass to perfection to skipper Ken Morris, who sprinted in from 35 metres for an excellent try.

Donovan was soon back in the action, breaking from his own 22 into the Brynamman half, where Davies kicked a 45 metre penalty and Pencoed led 0-11 after 15 minutes.

Home scrum half Daffyd Jones put his side on the scoreboard with a penalty goal. Pencoed second row Chris John then scored a remarkable try, taking

the ball in broken play in the outside centre position; the young forward put his left wing Aaron Songhurst away, before supporting and taking the return pass and putting in a deft chip kick which Dan Biggar would have been proud of, then winning the race for the touchdown against the home full back!

Davies increased Pencoed's lead with a penalty and Pencoed led 19-3 after 28 minutes. Pencoed were on fire at this point, Second rows Howells and John setting up good ball which Donovan whisked away before Davies fed Scott Narbeth on the angle, the centre splitting the home defence from 40 metres for a superb score; Davies converted. Jones replied with a home penalty, but at the interval Pencoed led 26-11.

Pencoed destroyed the home scrum on the onset of the second half, before Davies added two further penalties to lead 32-11.

Brynamman hit back and left wing Matthew Stoneman crossed halfway out, Jones converting.

The home side were



Ken Morris sets off (above), while Scott Narbeth (below) crosses the try line. PICTURES BY JULIE HANCOCK.

enjoying their best period of the match but Pencoed were in no mood to surrender their 18-32 lead; Howells won a lineout turnover on halfway and Pencoed swept play into the home 22 where Prentice crashed over for the bonus point try.

In the dying seconds Glen Hiscocks capitalised on some loose play from the Brynamman backs to sprint away from 40 metres for a fifth try, and Davies added the extras for a match contribution of 19 points, and a final score of 44-18.

Several Pencoed



players put their hands up for man of the match, Davis, John, and Curtis Williams among others, but the all-round play of scrum half James Donovan deservedly won the award, Donovan making a huge impression on his Pencoed senior debut. Another plus during

the game for Pencoed was the introduction of youth players Jordan Hawkins and Ryan Richardson to first team action.

On Saturday, Pencoed will look to maintain their unbeaten new year winning sequence at home to Vardre, 2.30pm kick off. **TR**

Indiscipline costs Kenfig Hill dear

A bitterly disappointing day for the coaches and supporters of the Mules as indiscipline cost them victory over second placed Cwmllynfell.

Three yellow cards meant the home side spent thirty minutes of the game playing with fourteen men.

The game started with the Mules attacking but a dropped pass saw Cwmllynfell pick the ball up and missed tackles saw right winger Trystan Lewis cross the line with full back Peter Thomas converting.

Kenfig Hill then conceded two penalties with Thomas kicking both of them. The home side backs then started to play and were a cut above the opposition, showing some skilled moves.

Left wing Curtis Kerton showed a clean pair of heels to the covering defence to score in the corner and then centre Rhodri Clark blasted over for a try straight from the kick off, with outside half Nicky Giles converting.

The visitors came back just before half time with a try by scrum half Craig Jones, Thomas converting.

The Mules continued attacking at the start of the second half with the backs outplaying the



Curtis Kerton scores for Kenfig Hill (above) as Matthew Davies (below) is tackled. PICTURES BY PETER GILLING.

visitors and they were rewarded with a try by livewire scrum half Tom James, full back Raymond Evans converting.

Sadly further indiscipline by Kenfig Hill saw Thomas add two further penalties for Cwmllynfell.

Kenfig Hill came back strongly and the backs playing some dazzling rugby, stretching the visitors' defence to the full. Prop Matthew Davies finished off a good move involving interplay between the backs and forwards, taking the final pass and sidestepping his way over the line and this brought the Mules within in two points of the visitors.

The home side continued to attack and were close to scoring on two occasions when they were called back for a forward pass and on the second occasion the ball was dropped close to the line. There was a collective sigh of relief from the visiting team and their supporters when the final whis-



tle went. Kenfig Hill outscored Cwmllynfell by four tries to two but the penalty count went four to two against them.

Final score: Kenfig Hill 24, Cwmllynfell 26. For Kenfig Hill, Steve Gillard, returning from injury, gave a man of the match performance, with wingers Curtis Kerton and Mike Kennedy having outstanding games.

Hooker Karl Davies and back row forward Scott Waller both made big impacts when they came on as substitutes and Tom James stood out as scrum half.

GOS

Shooting club are on target

THE Tondur Target Shooting Club pride ourselves in the provisions that we make for the disabled to be able to take up the sport of target shooting and a year ago it was decided that we should install a facility to enable the blind and visually impaired to try the sport on an equal footing with sighted shooters.

A taster session was held during May 2012 and everyone agreed that we should progress the facility. There have been hiccups along the way but we are now in a position to install and use the equipment, with the help of a development grant from Sport Wales.

When it is mentioned that the blind can try target shooting, eyebrows are raised. However, it is possible with the system being based on some specialist equipment.

A purpose-made acoustic sight from an optics manufacturer in Austria is fitted to a dedicated target air rifle and the shooter connects to it through a set of headphones.

At the target end a bright light is shone on the target, which is white in the centre and shaded

out to black on the outside. The sight registers the brightness of the light and sends a sound to the shooter which varies in pitch as the centre of the target is aimed at.

The sound is very much like that which a metal detector emits and increases in pitch as the sight finds the centre of the target.

There are two other VI facilities in Wales, one in Pembroke Dock and one in Bangor, so ours will only be the third installation in the Principality and could well produce shooters to go on to the European and World Target Shooting Championships etc, not forgetting the Paralympics, of course.

On Friday, April 5, at around 11am, the facility will be officially opened, with Marlene Thomas, the Bridgend County Borough Mayor, and Huw Irranca Davies, MP for the Gower constituency, in attendance. Blind and visually impaired members from Bridgeview, the Bridgend and district Visually Impaired Society, will be using the equipment.

For more information telephone 02920 890255, email: bill@tondushooting.org.uk or visit: tondushooting.org.uk.

BILL PHELPS

Cappa Bleu is local hope for the National

THE Evan Williams-trained Cappa Bleu, which finished fourth in last year's Aintree spectacular, is one of the favourites for this Saturday's Aintree Grand National and, at the time of writing, is just a 12-1 chance with the book-makers.

Evan, who came close to saddling the winner with *State Of Play* on more than one occasion, knows that to win the 'National' would be really something very, very special.

He said: "It would be a dream for us all to win it, that's what racing is all about, but there's no point in viewing it as a normal race because as soon as you do that, it will come back to beat you on the backside."

All horse racing enthusiasts in the Vale will be hoping that The GEM next week will be carrying a front page story about a Llanfarcfan farmer's son who has made turf history by becoming the trainer of the first horse trained in Wales to have won the world's greatest steeplechase since *Kirkland*, trained in Pembrokeshire, was successful in 1905.

Meanwhile, Aberthir's Tim Vaughan's former Scottish Grand National winner *Beshabar* is out of the race owing to injury and Tim will be relying on his *Saint Are*, which is a 50-1 chance.

Perhaps Tim will have better luck with his *Tartak*, who has had Friday's John Smiths Topham Chase as his target for some time. A past winner of the Midway

Chase, when trained by Tom George, *Tartak* finished a good third at the recent Cheltenham National Hunt Festival meeting.

Last Wednesday, Tim sent just one horse, *Silentplan*, all the way to Wetherby and the five-year-old bay gelding, partnered by Richard Johnson, landed the Open National Hunt Flat Race by three-and-three-quarter lengths from *Marrakech Trader* after being made the 15-8 favourite.

Meanwhile, at Ffos Las on Thursday, Evan's *Firebird Flyer*, which carried top weight of 11st12lb in the Tanners Wine Handicap Chase, proved too speedy for 15-year-old *Victory Gunner*.

Firebird Flyer was ridden by Adam Wedge and Evan said: "He ran well last time and was given half a chance by the handicapper. I was delighted with the little horse. He's won three for us this season."

Evan's assistant trainer, James Tudor from Cowbridge, also had plenty to smile about.

He won the Llewellyn Humphreys Novices Hunter Chase on David Llewellyn's homebred prolific point-to-pointer *Rosies Peacock*.

Rosies Peacock was followed home by local point-to-pointer, the grey *My Fellow*, owned and trained by Andy Quick.

BRIAN LEE

Honours even for under-9s teams

IN total contrast to the arctic weather the previous week, the Cowbridge under-9s enjoyed glorious sunshine for their local home derby with Bridgend Sports on Easter Sunday.

Eleven of the squad were prised away from their Easter eggs and played two halves in what proved to be a very entertaining and thrilling game.

The game was played with nine-a-side as Bridgend Sports had the bare nine with Cowbridge playing two rolling subs.

The first half saw the Sports take an early lead as they moved the ball well to both sides of the field. However, this early score was cancelled out by a Steffan Evans try, but Cowbridge once again fell behind as the Sports stretched the Cowbridge defence out wide.

Silky running from

Ruben Davies once again levelled matters for the home side but Sports pulled ahead through two further tries.

Just before half time Robbie Brown crossed the try line to make the half time score 4-3 to Bridgend Sports.

The second half saw both teams going try for try in a tight battle. Both sides looked to keep the ball alive and some excellent off-loading from the tackle created space for some fine tries to be scored.

Two weaving runs from Ruben Davies resulted in two super tries and, following Cowbridge turning over possession, Akka Guwy squeezed over in the corner in what was an excellent finish.

In the midst of the try scoring Robbie Brown was proving to be a one man wrecking machine for Cowbridge, tackling everything that moved and Rhydian Williams produced a wonderful try saving touchline

tackle.

However, the Sports had scored three very good tries of their own in this period and with the score 7-6 to the Sports, the last play of the game was called.

Cowbridge, during this phase of play, showed real composure which was rewarded as Steffan Evans crossed the whitewash to earn a thrilling, well deserved draw.

This was an excellent game played between two good sides and the coaches of both sides should be pleased with the performances the boys put in; the chocolate was well earned!

Squad: Ruben Davies, Will Ryan, Ethan Francis, Lewys Robins, Robbie Brown, Tom Brennan, Rhydian Williams, Akka Guwy, Archie Lloyd, Luke Treadwell and Steffan Evans.

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Birthdays

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Darren Baker
9th April 2013
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Sue, Joe & Abigail xxx

HAPPY 30TH BIRTHDAY
DANIELLE THOMAS
on 9th April, 2013
Love from Jessica, Jasmine, Gareth, Mum, Dad, Liane, Carey, Iain, Emily & your nieces & nephews xxx

HAPPY 18th BIRTHDAY
Jessie Lloyd
7th April 2013
Our little girl is all grown up!
All our love, Mum, Dad, Becky, Arthur and Salem
x x x

Anniversaries

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(Anne & Alun Thomas)
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Family Notices

O'CONNOR Meyrick

The funeral of Meyrick O'Connor will now take place at St Cadoc's Roman Catholic Church, Townmill Road, Cowbridge on Monday 8th April at 12 noon followed by burial at Llysorweny Churchyard.
A reception will be held for Meyrick's friends & family at The Bear Hotel at 1pm.
Further enquiries may be directed to the Funeral Directors, W James & Sons, Fommon.
Tel 01446 710096.

PEMBER Margaret

Peacefully on March 25 at Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend, Margaret of St Athan, beloved wife of Alun, dearly loved mother of Royston, Heather, Alun and Jonty, much loved grandmother and great-grandmother.
Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fommon. Funeral Friday April 12, service 2pm at St Athan Church followed by interment in St Athan Cemetery. Flowers may be sent to the Funeral Home.

OWEN Mansel

Peacefully at Ty Gwyn Nursing Home, Penarth, on 25th March 2013, Mansel, loving husband of Margaret, proud father of Richard and Stephanie. He will be sadly missed by all his family and friends. Funeral service to be held at the Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry, on Tuesday, 9th April at 11.15am. Family flowers only please, but donations, if desired, will be appreciated for Ty Gwyn Nursing Home and may be sent directly to Ty Gwyn Nursing Home, 21-23 Stanwell Road, Penarth, CF64 2EZ.
All enquiries to Green Willow Funerals, 21A Station Road, Dinas Powys, CF64 4DE. Tel. (029) 2051 4627

JONES

Phoebe May

Peacefully passed away on March 27th at her home in Rhooose, with her family around her, Phoebe, beloved wife of Tom, dearly loved mother of Stephen and Lynda, much loved grandmother of Melanie, Louisa, Felicity, Stephen, Lloyd and Liberty, great-grandmother of Curtis, Chiara, Sophia, Mitchell, Caiden and Lincoln.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fommon. Funeral Thursday, April 11th, service 11.15am at Porthkerry Church followed by interment in Porthkerry Cemetery. Family flowers only may be sent to the Funeral Home, donations in lieu, if desired, to Alzheimers Disease Society c/o J James, 11 Fommon Road, Rhooose, Vale of Glamorgan CF62 3DZ.

Thank You

THANK YOU
The family of Bill Braund of Kathleen Street wish to thank everyone who came to his aid when he fell recently in Claude Road. Everyone was so kind and helpful. Bill is now recovering from his ordeal.

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WHO WANTS TO BUILD WHAT AND WHERE

Messrs Roger Thomas – Millands Park, Llanmaes – Erection of a small agricultural shed for the storage of machinery, hay, fertilizers, sheep and general agricultural implements. NST Management & Development – 29 High Street, Cowbridge – Alterations to ground floor and extension to rear of ground floor. Lloyds Banking Group – Lloyds TSB Bank plc, 1 Windsor Road, Penarth – Three internally illuminated textbands; two internally illuminated projectors; one internally illuminated round brand logo; two internally illuminated heritage window light strips; one externally non-illuminated applied vinyl; two externally non-illuminated aluminium name plates; two internally non-illuminated applied vinyls. Mr and Mrs Nigel Jones – 112 Stanwell Road, Penarth – Proposed ground floor utility and kitchen extension. MacDonald's Restaurants Ltd – MacDonald's Restaurants Ltd., Ty Verlon Industrial Estate, Cardiff Road, Barry – Various new freestanding signs. Reconfiguration of existing signage to suit new drive-thru layout. MacDonald's Restaurants Ltd. – MacDonald's Restaurants Ltd., Ty Verlon Industrial Estate, Cardiff Road, Barry – Minor alterations to the drive-thru lane to provide a side-by-side order point which incorporates a new island for the associated signage. The relocation of the grill bays and the installation of two customer order displays with canopies over. Mr Howard Anstee – 38 Smithies Avenue, Sully – Outline application for four bedroom dwelling on existing plot in garden of 38 Smithies Avenue, Sully. Mr and Mrs Grey – Pheasant Rise, Cowbridge Road, St Nicholas – Demolish and reconstruct conservatory to rear. Mr Tucker – 8 Cae'r Odyn, Dinas Powys – Conversion of garage to living accommodation. Ms Vivienne Edwards – Starlight View, 156 Westward Rise, Barry – The erection of a timber fence. Mr Ivor Tanner – Highdene, Cowbridge Road, St Nicholas – Proposed new dwelling in garden of Highdene, St Nicholas. Cardiff Council – Cambrian Marina and adjoining land, Watkiss Way, Cardiff – Variation of Conditions of Outline Permission 08/02191/C to allow for phasing implementation and

other matters where specified in letter. Mrs N Richards – Tudor Lodge, Bonvilston – Construction of a timber clad single storey stable block. Mr Bert Davelaar – Land at 103 Penlan Road, Llandough – Development of a detached house with a double garage. Prof Christopher MacLeod – 41 Cardiff Road, Dinas Powys – Erection of rear single storey extension. Mr John Durrant – Franklin Court, Llanmaes – Remove five conifers. Mr Richard and Sian Banks – The Tower, Tower Hill, Penarth – External renovations, ground floor extension and new vehicular entrance. Mr Adrian Shakespeare – 3 Frampton Lane, Llantwit Major – First floor extension above existing garage. Mr John Bowsher – 12 Chervell Road, Penarth – Construction of single storey front porch and cloakroom, construction of single storey rear extension and new roof, over-cladding with vertical stained timber boarding to existing stucco on first floor elevations. Replacement of some windows at ground and first floor, minor internal alterations and construction of new chimney stack. Mr Raymond Thomas – Long range of stone outbuildings, north-west of Sutton House, Llandow, Cowbridge – Repair and construction work to gable wall. Mr Mark Thomas – Greystones, Rhooose Road, Rhooose – 30 per cent crown reduction to Ash tree; dismantle line of Conifers; 50 per cent crown reduction to Weeping Willow; dismantle Conifer next to pond and dismantle Birch tree. Mr Rebaz Abdoolla – 40 High Street, Barry – Proposed change of use to one bedroom ground floor self-contained apartment (amendment to 2010/00545/FUL). Mr Brian Casey – 7 Charteris Close, Penarth – Extensions and alterations to bungalow and garage. Mr Lyn Howell – 5 St James Crescent, Barry – Proposed rear orangeries and double storey side extension for domestic use only. Taylor Wimpey – Land south of the railway line, Trem Echni, Rhooose Point, Rhooose – Signs. Lloyds Banking Group – Lloyds TSB Bank plc, High Street, Cowbridge – To upgrade external sign-work to the new trading style of the applicant. Mr John Clowes – Hillcot House, Church Road, Llanblethian – Fell two large conifers. Fitz Project Management – Poundfield Farm, Pound Lane, Wenvoe – Two storey south west wing extension to existing house. Lloyds Banking Group – Lloyds TSB Bank plc, 9 Boverton Road, Llantwit Major – Installation of illuminated and non-illuminated signs. Mr Eifion Watkins – Boverton Post Office, Boverton Road, Boverton – One illuminated hanging sign, internally mounted, static illumination only. Mr Lee Russell – 2 Norwood Crescent, Barry – Proposed single storey side extension to form garage, utility and home office. Mr N Humphreys – 84 South Road, Sully – Erection of glazed balustrade and screen to perimeter of flat roof to rear of dwelling house. Mrs Beryl Rosser – 23 Murch Crescent, Dinas Powys – Single storey rear extension to include granny annexe. Mr Nigel Esterkin – 82-84 Holtton Road, Barry – Change of use of upper floors from offices to three self-contained residential flats. Mr Russell Bailey – 22 Cory Crescent, Peterston Super Ely – Rear extension and re-roofing of existing flat roofed garage. Tesco Stores Ltd. – Tesco Stores Ltd., Marconi Avenue, Penarth – Installation of timber cladding situated to the right of the lobby on the front store elevation. Tesco Stores Ltd. – Tesco Stores Ltd., Marconi Avenue, Penarth – Various advertisements at site. Mrs Ralph Morel – The Stables, adjacent to The Old Rectory, St Brides Super Ely – To establish the continuous use of Flat 1 within the building known as the Stable Block as a single residential dwelling – independent of, and separate to, (i.e. not ancillary to) the use and occupation of the property/residential dwelling known as The Old Rectory and/or related commercial business purposes. Fitz Project Management – 49 Kenilworth Road, Barry – Conversion of house in multiple occupation into four single person flats. Miss Mark Temple – 11 Charteris Close, Penarth – Works to existing bungalow including rear and loft extensions and solar panels to roof. Mr I and Mrs E Ashman – Land to the west of Craig Yr Eos Avenue, Ogmore By Sea – Development of six dwellings with memorial garden.

Mr Tony Harris – 19 Llewellyn Street, Barry – Erection of single storey extension on rear elevation and pitched roof on existing two storey rear elevation. McDonald's Restaurant Ltd – McDonald's Restaurants Ltd, Ty Verlon Industrial Estate, Cardiff Road, Barry – Reconfiguration of existing signage suite to include the retention of one height restrictor, four freestanding signs and one customer order display. The relocation of one welcome sign and the installation of two banners and one Totem sign. Mr Mike Pycroft – 7 Melyn y Gors, Barry – Single storey extension to side of property. Miss Kirsten Wilcock – 120 Redlands Road, Penarth – 1) A 9.2m x 2.4m ground floor side extension underneath existing first floor side extension; 2) A 6.4m x 4.0m single storey ground floor rear extension. Mr Scott Browne – 6 Gerddi Margaret, Barry – Garage conversion. William Rees – 97 Murlande Way, Rhooose – Two storey extension to side of property. Conversion of existing garage into living room. Mr Phillip Atkin – Little Pen Onn, Llanfarcarn – Proposed two storey extension to existing split level bungalow. Accommodation to provide additional living space and guest suite. Mr Michael Skinner – 60 Arcot Street, Penarth – The conversion from a single dwelling to three flats. Mr Mark Jones – Crossenny, Ewenny Road, St Brides Major – Two storey extension to existing dwelling and conservatory. Ms Heather Booley – 137 Westbourne Road, Penarth – Make crossover and dropped kerb adjacent to 137 Westbourne Road, Penarth. A paved driveway will be made with hardstanding for two cars. Nick Boyle – Treguff Farm, Cowbridge – Installation and operation of a ground mounted solar photovoltaic facility (generation capacity of approximately 4.9 megawatts).

THE MAJOR'S TEN MEN GRAB ALL THREE POINTS

ON a bright breezy day Llantwit Major AFC welcomed Tredegar to Windmill Lane.

This was a must win game for the home team if they were to maintain any hope of a promotion place.

The task was made all the more difficult with the central spine of the team Gould, Pratt and Nash all missing and Tom Rees out for several weeks after picking up a bizarre training ground injury.

The starting line-up required a reshuffle which had Max Morgan into the back four and a reshaped midfield with youngsters Dawes, Griffiths and Renfree given central roles alongside the experienced Jones and veteran Lindsay.

The Major started well and had the best of the early exchanges with Dawes, Roscrow and Griffiths all going close.

The game was to take a significant twist after just 15 minutes when the referee awarded Tredegar a free kick 30 metres from goal and with the ball waiting to be played, brandished a red card at Andy Shaw which surprised both sets of players and the supporters alike.

This had Major on the back foot and required some urgent changes to the shape of the team which resulted in Renfree playing in a wide left position with Dawes providing the cover in midfield.

The home team continued to pass the ball well and to frustrate the opposition who had the advantage of the conditions.

It was to the home team's credit that they continued to play well with all nine outfield players working extremely hard and supporters arriving late to the ground didn't initially notice the home team were a man down.

The Major continued to dominate the game and the defence marshalled superbly by Robinson with great support from Morgan and Cox were getting on top and deservedly took the lead after 25 minutes when Tredegar failed to clear from a corner and Roscrow was on hand to head into the goal.

It was the least the home team deserved and the

team showed tremendous spirit to hunt down and compete for every ball. It was certainly a far cry from the team which had played ten days before.

The second half started in much the same manner and despite the best efforts of the opposition it was the Major who continued to dominate proceedings.

The midfield were working overtime with Lindsay and Jones leading by example but the industry of Dawes, Griffiths and Renfree was quite superb and set a magnificent tempo for the team.

The home team extended the lead after 65 minutes when loan striker Roscrow who had also worked tirelessly for the team latched on to some poor defensive play and hit a rocket shot low into the corner of the net from 25 yards with the keeper rooted to the spot.

The home team continued to dominate the game with keeper Whitlam only exercising his vocal cords as he boomed out encouragement to the team.

As tired legs began to show, Landsdown replaced Roscrow and with only his second touch hit a superb shot from 20 yards which hit the post, flew across the goal with the keeper once again just able to watch and hope.

Cox, who had put in a solid performance, was replaced by Faux who showed his versatility for the team by going into a central defensive role and also made a valid contribution as time was being played out.

As the final whistle went it was a resounding victory for the home team which the opposition acknowledged as they left the field.

The spirit shown by the home team was excellent and Robinson was delighted with the reaction he had from the team which also does him great credit as well.

This will need to be maintained as the games will now come quickly as the season nears to a close.

The next home game is this Saturday, April 6, at home to Bettws with a 2.30pm kick off.

Squad: Whitlam, Cox, Robinson, Shaw, Morgan, Renfree, Jones, Faux, Griffiths, Roscrow, Landsdown, Lindsay (c) and Dawes. **MR**

New look Royal Porthcawl awaits senior golf stars

A NEW look Royal Porthcawl will await the stars of the European Senior Tour when the south Wales venue hosts the Speedy Services Wales Senior Open from June 14-16.

The course is being modified ahead of hosting the tournament for the first time since John Bland's victory in 2010, with the changes also mindful of Royal Porthcawl staging the Senior Open Championship Presented by Rolex for the first time in 2014.

At 7,071 yards, it is expected to be the longest course on the senior tour in 2013 aside from Royal Birkdale, which hosts this year's Senior Open Championship Presented by Rolex.

The course layout is being re-routed for the Speedy Services Wales Senior Open so that players will start from the normal 18th hole and finish on the 17th. This is aimed at enhancing the spectator experience as a tented village can be sited near to the new tournament first tee and 18th green, while it will provide more room for an 18th green grandstand and leaderboard, as well as sponsors' hospitality area and viewing pavilion.

Significant changes have also been made to several holes, with new tees on the tournament holes six, seven, 11, 12 and 13.

The greens at the fifth, sixth, tenth, 11th and 13th holes of the tournament layout have also been re-contoured, with the new 504 yard par five finishing hole set up to provide an exciting climax to both the Speedy Services Wales Senior Open and next year's Senior Open Championship Presented by Rolex, which takes place from July 24 - 27, 2014.

Michael Petch, tournament director of the Speedy Services Wales Senior Open, said: "The existing 18 holes were originally laid out in 1909 and reshaping the greens came about as a result of modern machinery more than doubling the speed of the greens compared to when they were originally designed.

"We feel that the new course format will also provide the best spectator experience, while also providing a challenging and exciting layout for our players. All of these changes have been made with next year's Senior Open Championship in mind, when Royal Porthcawl will host the prestigious event for the first time.

"We are all looking forward to June's Speedy Services Wales Senior Open to see exactly how these modifications play, and how our leading players tackle the new look course at Royal Porthcawl."

It will be the third time Royal Porthcawl has hosted the Speedy

Services Wales Senior Open, after 2009 when South African Bertus Smit triumphed and in 2010 when his compatriot Bland claimed the title.

Former Ryder Cup player Barry Lane will be the defending champion after holding off the challenge of countryman Philip Golding last year at Conwy (Caernarfonshire) Golf Club.

'World class'
Coun Mel Nott, Leader of Bridgend County Borough Council, said: "I'm thrilled to be welcoming the Speedy Services Wales Senior Open back to Royal Porthcawl this summer. This is another fantastic opportunity to showcase Porthcawl as a world class golfing destination.

"It will also mark the start of an exciting year for the area's golfing profile with the Senior Open Championship to look forward to in July 2014. We can guarantee first class facilities, amid spectacular scenery, matched by the warmest

of welcomes. In turn we expect our local economy to positively benefit from the 'putting pound'.

"Porthcawl is already a famous tourist destination and we are proud to be leading its physical, cultural and sporting regeneration in which golf plays such a significant role."

Michael Newland, secretary of Royal Porthcawl Golf Club, said: "The club is delighted to be hosting the Wales Senior Open for a third time. Royal Porthcawl Golf Club has a rich tournament history, hosting the first Penfold tournament in 1932, the Coral Classic, the Walker Cup and The Amateur Championship on six occasions. Players and spectators alike have enjoyed the course, and with the changes that have taken place we hope this will enhance their experience."

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GEM sport

Athletic knock halo off the Tata 'Saints'

AFTER **toppling** **fifth** **placed** **Narberth** **at** **Newbridge Fields** **last week, Bridgend Athletic travelled to Margam to optimistically repeat the feat against fourth placed Tata 'Saints', a team had won its last five league outings.**

Ninth placed Athletic made a dynamic start into the wind, but despite their strong play the visitors had the first score when home full back, Gareth Walters kicked a penalty for an Athletic player not rolling away and impeding play.

After 15 minutes the Athletic more than made up when their pack drove through the opposition and after initially being held up, the ball moved to second row, Scott Hicks who drove over the line for the corner touchdown, converted by outside half, Stephen Lewis.

Both sides had come to play, but in the early stages the home team seemed content to drive up the middle, whereas

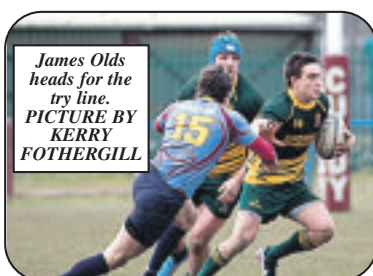
the Newbridge Fields team looked to attack with its entire fifteen players.

From one such play, right wing Nick Hinton had a great run along the touchline, but sadly lost the ball forward in the act of touching down.

The visitors did not have long to wait however because in a purple patch they conjured up two more tries, both converted by outside half, Lewis.

The first of these tries started with a great break by full back, James Olds, before being taken on by the forwards, before finally Scott Hicks getting his second score by making the last 15 metres to the try line despite two defenders hanging on to him.

The second try in this period was again started by Olds, who was having an impressive game, cross kicking for his chasing players. While the home wing seemed to have it covered, left wing, Will Williams harried him mercilessly, for the ball to be picked up by the charging centre, Tom Morgan, before transferring to talented



James Olds heads for the try line.
PICTURE BY KERRY FOTHERGILL

scrum half, Aled Thomas who raced around behind the posts.

The Athletic were playing out of their skins and were now leading 3-21 away from home against last season's Division 1 West champions.

Dependable lock, Griff Davies replaced the injured Jamie Doherty, the latter having also put himself about the field. The home team however, went on to show that they would not surrender their winning ways easily.

First Tata Steel RFC wing, Jon Phillips scored in the corner - the play had started well before when a rare missed tackle allowed the ball to pass between three players before the try.

While full back, Walters missed the difficult conversion, he kicked a penalty when an Athletic player was adjudged off his feet.

The half ended with huge spirit from the visitors who might have wrapped the game up before half time. First a two on one opportunity was spurned with the try line begging and then a long floated pass deserved a point scoring finish after a superb balanced run from centre, Mike Hathaway during which he evaded three defenders.

Nevertheless, many visiting supporters watching the 11 - 21 advantage had seen enough by half time to think that this could be their day. Others hoped that the missed chances would not come back to haunt them.

The optimism of those supporters and no doubt the team coaches would have been boosted by the way the Bridgend team started the second half with a bonus point try within minutes.

James Olds, clearly reveling in his full back role, slid through a gap created by the clever running of outside half, Lewis to touch down and lead the club try scorers this season; Lewis could not convert.

A difficult period followed when centre, Tom Morgan was sent to the sin bin for an unacceptable tackle. This gave the initiative to the home team, which despite the defenders heroic tackling, could not prevent a scrum drive and score on the Athletic line.

Blindside, Rob Hill claimed the touchdown to reduce the score difference to just 10 points. On the half hour Ben Thomas replaced Callum McLeod, both having sound games.

The Ath were using the elements well by kicking for the corners to keep the home team pegged back, most notably by the half backs and Mike Hathaway, the latter breaking home forwards resolve with several finely placed efforts.

A missed penalty by

Lewis was followed by another wake up call when home team No 8, Robbie Morgan, who had an impressive game was driven over the line after a series of similar drives. Walters again failed to convert the try but the gap had reduced to 21-26.

Almost immediately and shortly after prop Matt Muir had replaced Hugh Morris, the play had been taken to the far end, when another two on one opportunity was missed with what turned out to be another wrong option taken.

It turned out that this missed scoring chance, together with a missed penalty kick at goal did not matter as the referee had blown the final whistle.

The Athletic back row of Sean Derrick, Sean Williams, Callum McLeod and Ben Thomas had carried, harried and tackled the Tata 'Saints' into the ground, as had all three locks, Scott Hicks, Jamie Doherty and Griff Davies.

The front row of Rhod Apsee, Huw Morris and Matt Muir performed admirably against experienced opponents not used to being matched and sometimes bettered.

Captain and hooker, Simon Mustoe was everywhere and his usual inspiration to his playing colleagues. Those who get to watch regularly have great respect for effort and with this team it can't be faulted.

There's no doubt the club coaches will wish to look at the chances which got away. They are likely to be needed when the club face league leaders, Ebbw Vale in a home fixture at the South Wales Police Ground on Saturday next, 2.30pm on April 6. DB

Porthcawl snatch the win against Ogmore Vale



Nick Nutman on the charge.
PICTURE BY TRACEY WILLIAMS

PORHCWL **went into this match with Ogmore Vale looking for a win that would keep them in the mix at the top of the table, while trying to avoid the double, following Ogmore's win at South Road earlier in the season.**

On a bitterly cold but dry afternoon, the visitors found it far more difficult than the home side to get into their stride, as the home eight provided an early collectiveness, setting out their stall early.

With Ryan Jones controlling well at 10, it was no surprise when he edged his side deservedly in front with a penalty to punish Porthcawl indiscipline for 3-0.

Porthcawl, with Richard Hnyda, Nick Nutman and Lloyd Long providing plenty of possession from the line-outs, contrived to make things difficult, often taking the wrong option, when simple passing decisions would have yielded more.

That said, skipper Matthew Owen got the Seaweeds on the score board with a well-taken

try following his strong dart into the home 22. He couldn't convert however and it was 3-5.

Still Ogmore came back with purpose and despite not breaking through the Porthcawl defence, Ryan Jones' boot took full advantage with a huge penalty from 45 metres for 6-5 as again Porthcawl fell foul of the whistle at a ruck.

Owen and then Jones again, exchanged further penalties to leave it finely balanced at the break - 9-8 in Ogmore's favour.

The second half started in similar fashion, with both sides looking for an edge, only for wrong options to scupper numerous attacks by both sides.

Matters seemed to swing in Porthcawl's favour as the home pack started to show signs of tiring, with Hnyda, Sean Kennedy, who was outstanding throughout, and Nutman, all driving purposefully into the heart of the home defence as

the Seaweeds found a little more in their tank.

Skipper Owen thankfully proceeded to make up for the lack of finesse and finishing behind the scrum, with the boot, as the Seaweeds started to get on top, bolstered with the arrival of Jamie Fry at hooker and their scrum improving.

The skipper stepped up to land three penalties, one after another, at virtually ten minute intervals to leave Ogmore needing to find two scores to snatch a result with the match ebbing to its close, the final score 17-9.

It wasn't to be as Porthcawl controlled the final exchanges secured valuable points from an often mediocre match, with the prospect of encounters with Glyncoch, Dinas Powys and Ponthrhydyfen yet to come as the season reaches its finale of many re-arranged matches in fewer days.

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